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the ALTERNATIVE: AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

Gala Summer Dictators Issue

Adam B. Ulam: Uncle Joe's Legacy

Robert J. Maddox: Falling for the Fuehrer

A. James Gregor: Mussolini and the Intellectuals

W.A.C. Adie: Mao as Poet and Hero

Plus essays, reviews, and diatribes

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• June 1 to July 14, and America staggers through the most infernal heat to scorch the West since the Dresden fire-bombing some years back. Nonetheless the most tedious man to bedenizen the White House in recent years continues to demonstrate the ambiguous grace of parochial hum and fatuous drum.

• In less than a year he and his hand-picked coterie of presidential yokels have managed to make the business of government almost wholly uninteresting. No longer are the headlines lurid with notifications of fresh White House initiatives. Increasingly the pundits' commentary wanders off from matters presidential. Woebegone "activists" take up the petit bourgeois coil in vegetarian restaurants and personal therapy infernos. *The New York Review of Books* grows placid, and even the diatribes of *The Nation* have dropped their theme of political apocalypse, stifled their obsession with bourgeois hellishness, and assumed the molecular structure of gossip columns. Today the average Americano no longer fears for his freedoms or for the imminent bankrupting of the Republic, though he is terrorized by the prospect of being invited as a representative from the general citizenry to a White House dinner. The tedium that now invests the mansion at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is reminiscent of those charnel hours during the sainted Wilson's hopeless invalidism, and the helpless White House guest's only refuge is a Baptist-brewed wine cooler. Zounds!

• What theme the White House press corps will choose for reporting the Wonderboy's highjinks remains undivined, though my agents inform me that the Potomac College of Scribblers grows impatient with White House press releases attesting to the Wonderboy's Grade A cerebral cortex. They are quizzical over his ostentatious hankering for culture, and the patriots amongst them redden with embarrassment over his adolescent enthusiasm for self-improvement courses in such ludicrous fare as speed reading. The dignity and intelligence of a president who boasts of maintaining a constant program of light classics while he pores over affairs of state have become matters for debate wherever journalists palaver. And only the more infantile among them wax giddy over the fact that the President's top *aides-de-camp* are *clowns-de-tout*. My guess is that when the journalists fall into accord on the Wonderboy's essential mediocrity and obtuseness, life in Washington will again resemble the whirl of downtown Beirut.

• All over Europe the old political alignments are losing their hold on the populace, but on June 16 capitalist scoffers were faced with discomfiting proof of the amazing resilience of the Communist Party of the USSR. There, after more than a half century of unrivalled strength, Mr. Lenin's political patrimony seemed more robust than ever when a frisky Politburo elevated to the presidency 70-year-old Mr. Leonid Brezhnev in one unanimous whoop of proletarian jubilation. Mr. Brezhnev, the first Communist Party chairperson to become Soviet president, replaces Mr. Nikolai Podgorny whose whereabouts are unknown.

• The movement for sexual equality took another of those tricky dialectical swerves, when women's groups in France blackjacked the French Parliament into making the retirement age for *les femmes* five years lower than for *les hommes*. Flowers bloomed in the hearts of idealists all over America in mid-June when Mr. H.R. Haldeman and Mr. John Mitchell were finally imprisoned for their attempted *coup d'état* during the Nixon madness. Within days of their incarceration the patriot Mr. Huey Newton returned from self-exile in Cuba, perhaps heralding the day when all true patriots like the Weatherpeople and the FBI's Ten Most Wanted can step forth and assume their rightful place at the forefront of American society.

• On July 5, another helpless and hopeless victim of American society was moved to take action. Twenty-six-year-old Mr. Luis Robinson hijacked a bus, crippled two passengers, murdered a young father, and killed a 60-year-old woman as her blind husband sat helplessly by, before surrendering and giving the Establishment one more chance to treat him like a *human* being.

• Despite the dolorous fate of the first politician to try it, His Excellency Andrew Young became the second American politician to intentionally bug himself when he appeared at a June 26 press conference with a tape recorder. Why America's thoughtful ambassador to the United Nations should attach himself to a recording device perplexed many seasoned observers, but some believe that Mr. Young, who had earlier catalogued as racists Presidents Ford, Nixon, Johnson, and Kennedy, the Swedes, the Russians, all tax-paying citizens of Queens, New York, and even himself, may have been bearing a recorded message from President Carter reminding him that loose lips sink ships.

• From June 6 to June 9 Europeans scanned the skies for a glimpse of a 258-pound, 6-foot-6 airborne buffoon, the diverting Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada, "Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa, in general, and Uganda, in particular." Field Marshal Amin announced his intention to crash the Commonwealth Meeting and then disappeared noisily into the wild blue yonder aboard a caged Libyan aeroplane. Almost immediately Radio Uganda began issuing terrifying reports of the Third World magnifico's possible location. At first he was approaching Dublin; then Scotland; next he was soaring over western France. The anxiety grew unbearable, and at London's Heathrow aerodrome nervous multitudes of British security agents queued up in vast lines before the sorely pressed public comfort stations.

• Then on June 9 Radio Uganda declared that the crafty statesman had foiled British security, slipped into London for undisclosed purposes, and returned to Uganda for a festive 11-mile ride in a sedan chair propelled by 19 head of British citizens.

• Once again the Ugandan President had proved that his would not be a do-nothing administration, but treachery awaited him, and though Senator George S. McGovern has done everything humanly possible to limit CIA mischief, an attempt on President Amin's life was perpetrated, by two gun-wielding scoundrels. Luckily they aimed at his head and no vital organs were damaged, but Uganda was thrown into a funk when the ever-cautious president-for-life vamoosed into thin air. For days government officials looked frantically for him. Old girl friends were contacted, cabinet members dropped in on some of his favorite old watering holes; but all they found were the usual milling crowds of antelope and thousands of wild birds. On June 20 the *Washington Star* quoted Uganda's grief-stricken Vice President Mustafa Andrisi as he delivered a world-wide appeal for news of the missing Field Marshal: "If you find him, please contact Uganda immediately." It was not until the July meeting of the Organization of African Unity held in progressive Gabon that Mr. Amin was again seen in public, and looking none the worse for his ordeal, we are delighted to report.

• In London a dog urinating on the exposed electrical wires of a street lamp caused grave physical damage to his master; and in New Orleans the American Civil Liberties Union, attempting to raise funds for its campaign to put abortions within the reach of the poor, suffered a dismal public relations setback when that free abortion it auctioned off fetched but $30. In Chicago a convicted child molester, Mr. Guy Strait, testified to a Senate subcommittee that pornographic films featuring children "might have been beneficial" to the youthful participants. And two pederasts in Riverside, California, are claiming the American record for mass murder. They may have butchered more than 28 young boys. Elsewhere, it appears that the nefarious American intelligence community is focusing its efforts against Mrs. Helen Cannon. Mrs. Cannon, of Golden, Colorado, has reported to the local sheriff's department that either the FBI or the CIA has been spraying her outside plants with a deadly chemical in an attempt to dissuade her from opposing nuclear experiments. Furthermore her telephone has been bugged and some fiend has been feeding her dog a mystery substance causing it "to pass offensive gas." The Colorado Civil Liberties Union will doubtless be called in.

• In an apparent get-tough policy toward student dissidents, the revolutionary junta of Ethiopia has begun to use dynamite to execute rowdies. Proof of the idiocy of our nation's marijuana users was provided when twenty-year-old marijuana merchant Mr. Bruce Rosenzweig of Roxbury, New Jersey, telephoned one of his customers notifying him of the arrival of a new shipment of valuable weeds. Unfortunately Mr. Rosenzweig dialed the wrong number, getting instead the Middlesex County office of the narcotics task force and a trip to the hoosegow.

• Finally the Northern Bait and Ecology Farms' "nightcrawler and angleworm" bake-off, which was reported in our April issue, has been baked off. Congratulations to Mrs. Irene Stockman, address unknown, who simply stunned the judges. Despite luscious recipes for wiggle biscuits, chocolate worm delight, worm egg salad, and Mexican bean casserole mucho wormo, Mrs. Stockman triumphed with an unusual confection called worm cake. —*RET*

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Gala Summer Dictators Issue

Editor's Note

Why, you may wonder, a "Summer Dictators Issue" of *The Alternative*? Why devote so much space to four remarkably unpleasant as well as dead individuals?

"Politically," Adam Ulam points out, "Joseph Stalin remains very much alive." So, of course, does Mao. Our concern with the Georgian goat and the Oriental fireplug hardly needs justification. But Hitler and Mussolini are, fortunately, politically as well as otherwise moribund. They lost. Had they won, and Stalin and Mao lost, we would now study Nietzsche more respectfully, and Marx less intensely; we would often recall Stalin's exterminations of the 30s, and rarely aver to Hitler's of the 40s; and we would look forward to the eventual convergence of Fascism and liberal democracy, and worry about the need to hasten this process by encouraging the moderates and doves in the Fuhrer Chancellery.

To what extent are Hitler and Mussolini discredited today because they were vicious, and to what extent because they were losers? To what extent is Stalin frowned upon because he was vicious, and to what extent because he was ultimately checked by military might and had his "excesses" repudiated by his successors (who, however, did not forego the advantages of those excesses, i.e., their rule)? W.A.C. Adie quotes Felix Greene, writing about Mao and his cronies: "We are not dealing with a Hitler or Mussolini, or a latter-day Stalin....China is being led by historically conscious, strong, and enormously competent men who, as far back as the 1920s, identified themselves with the people and knew their needs." But surely Hitler, Stalin, and even Mussolini were as historically conscious, strong, and competent as Mao, and successfully identified themselves with "the people," and seemed to know their "needs." They too had in their heyday considerable appeal to some in the West. Is it not worthwhile to try to understand these dictators, their successes and failures, and the nature and sources of their appeal? For liberty and decency and honor do not automatically prevail in politics—or, for that matter, at the bar of history. Liberal democracy has to be defended against its enemies; the enemies of liberal democracy, and the reasons for the strength of their appeal, have to be understood. The following essays, by eminent scholars of the four leading dictators of our time, point to these important questions: Are "historical consciousness" and "strength" and the "ability to identify with the people" the correct standards for political judgment? And why are those in fact so often the standards of judgment invoked by intellectuals in the West today?

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Adam B. Ulam

The Legacy of Uncle Joe

Stalin is both the source of strength for the regime and its most perplexing dilemma, the teacher of the present rulers and their severe critic and rival.

Though medically he's been dead as of 9:50 p.m., March 5, 1953, politically Joseph Stalin remains very much alive, certainly not a man who can be trifled with by any Soviet politician. Consider October 1962. Nikita Khrushchev was just putting the finishing touches on the little surprise he was preparing for the U.S. in Cuba, when in an awful but prescient poem Yevtushenko sought to warn him of an unpleasant surprise which might be in store for the cunning leader right there in Moscow: "I beseech our government, oh, double, triple the guard at the grave so that Stalin may not rise again." Even more farsighted were the following lines: "I dream that a telephone has been placed in the coffin...no Stalin has not given up." And to be sure almost exactly two years later a call must have been put through on this phone to the offices of the Politburo, and Nikita Khrushchev was out on his ear. One of Khrushchev's main sins in the eyes of his colleagues was his garrulity about his predecessor, his tendency whenever in trouble to come out with yet another installment of Stalin's Unbelievable Yet True Crimes, and dark hints that some of his accomplices were still around resisting his, Khrushchev's, Leninist policies.

But this is far from having been the only instance of Stalin's posthumous intervention in Soviet politics. If on occasion his ghost rises wrathfully and smites a live politician, then in some ways he is a source of strength and comfort to his successors. His memory remains a powerful incentive to the average Soviet citizen to count his present blessings and be modest in his aspirations: What is an occasional food shortage or an arrest of a dissident compared with what went on under Stalin! "If you don't behave you'll end up with another Stalin" has been the unspoken message of every set of rulers since 1953 to their subordinates and the people at large. True, there is another and embarrassing side to such comparisons. Life was hard before 1953, but at least you had order, feels not an insignificant number of Soviet officials. You did not have the undignified spectacle of the Solzhenitsyns and Sakharovs slandering with impunity (certainly by comparison with what *he* would have done to them) the socialist fatherland, of its leaders having to plead with the Italian comrades about their policies and criticisms, and to haggle with the Americans over how many Jews should be rewarded for their anti-Soviet sentiments by being allowed to emigrate. It took some four hundred thousand soldiers to bring the errant Czechoslovak comrades to their senses, whereas in Stalin's time one telephone call would have been enough. Consider the Soviet youth and its growing fascination with the forbidden fruits of Western decadence. And it is better not even to speak about China. Where will it all end? So there is Stalin, both the source of strength for the regime and at the same time its most perplexing dilemma, the teacher of the present rulers, and at the same time their severe critic and rival.

If the ghost retains so much influence on Soviet society, and remains in many ways its number one problem, what then of the live Stalin? Solzhenitsyn begrudges him greatness even as a force for evil. Stalin was for the writer "a blind and (personally) unimportant instrument" of forces created by the Communist system. But it is unlikely that history will endorse this verdict. This man who accumulated personal power to an extent unprecedented in modern history must have had a genius for tyranny. The Communist system as shaped by Lenin, and Soviet Russia's political condition in the early twenties made Stalin possible, but certainly not inevitable. And for all the official protestations to the contrary, today's Soviet reality owes more to Stalin than to Lenin.

Consider the Communist Party. On Lenin's illness and withdrawal from active politics in 1922, it was far from being a mere instrument in the hands of whoever was at the top, be it a single dictator or, as at present, a handful of Politburo leaders. Party congresses held annually still heard criticisms of Lenin and his closest collaborators, major political issues were still vigorously debated, even though by hook or by crook, the ruling group would always in the end get its way. Political pluralism was not entirely dead in Soviet society, certainly the Trade Unions retained considerable autonomy. While the average citizen already lived in fear, rank-and-file Communists, short of committing a crime, enjoyed immunity from the ministrations of the secret police. Unless they directly challenged the ruling dogma, writers and artists enjoyed a degree of freedom. How quickly did those modest areas of personal and collective autonomy disappear under Stalin! And they certainly have not been recovered after the tyrant's death. Khrushchev tried intermittently and inconsistently to bring the system back to its Leninist prototype. But of course he could not succeed. His colleagues felt, probably justifiably from their point of view, that to discard even one basic feature of the Stalinist model meant to imperil the whole totalitarian structure. You let a Solzhenitsyn tell even part of the truth about the past, others will follow in his footsteps, and soon millions will be filled not only with revulsion but with passionate anger against the system which allowed such horrors. Allow the gatherings of the Communist Party to resume some of their original deliberative functions, and before long the fifteen million or so party members might not be content to leave decisions concerning their and the whole country's future in the hands of the self-perpetuating group of fifteen to twenty men. And of course the discarding of mass terror made it all the more imperative that the judiciary remain an obedient servant of the political leadership. The regime can no longer afford to be monstrously inhuman the way it was before 1953, but neither can it afford to dispense with the essentially Stalinist style of repression and control of society. →

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Much of Stalin's success in achieving and especially in retaining such enormous power can be traced to the ability of this Georgian, who to the end spoke his adopted language with an accent, to exploit and identify himself with Russian nationalism. He did it with an amazing cleverness and subtlety. Officially, and with apparent conviction when the occasion warranted it, he was the leader and chief ideologue of a movement which transcended national boundaries and feelings, in fact considered them as anachronistic. On other occasions, and equally convincingly, he was the spokesman for Soviet patriotism; Communism condemned and destroyed the jingoistic tradition of Imperial Russia, it urged loyalty and love of the Socialist Fatherland because, apart from serving social justice, this entirely new type of state enabled some one hundred twenty nationalities to live in perfect equality and to develop their distinctive cultures. But at first in moments of national emergency, and then quite constantly, it was Mother Russia rather than the pallid image of the Socialist Fatherland which was invoked both to preserve the regime and his own power. At the height of forced collectivization, which brought the country to the verge of economic and social chaos, Stalin sought to convince his countrymen that his inhuman and senseless policies were necessary for national salvation: "The history of Old Russia shows that because of her backwardness she was being constantly defeated....We are behind the leading countries by fifty or one hundred years. We must make up this distance in ten years...or we go under." Well, he convinced quite a few, especially among the young, that the country's salvation and greatness excused the deaths and deportations of millions of peasants. One does not stop when seized by patriotic elation to ask such questions as how Old Russia, which was being "constantly defeated," yet managed to stretch over one-sixth of the earth.

The national interest was, of course, also invoked as the rationale for terror. All those Trotskys, Zinovievs, Bukharins, etc., were not being punished or denounced because they displeased Comrade Stalin or begrudged his power, but because they were traitors in the employ of Hitler, the Japanese, etc.

Nationalism was the primary justification of the deal with Hitler. Why should Russia—the Soviet Union—fight a war to save foreign capitalists, or for that matter, even foreign Communists? And the deal enabled the Soviet Union to recover the territories which in the past, and of right, had belonged to the Russian state.

But the most explicit appeal to Russian nationalism came during the war. Once he recovered from the nervous breakdown brought by the news of the German invasion, Stalin, at first in a radio speech on July 3, tried the human touch combined with an ideological motif: "Brothers, sisters, I speak to you my friends" urging them to "unite around the Party of Lenin and Stalin." But when they did not and defeat followed upon defeat, he found a more convincing theme. In November 1941, he evoked the memory of the heroes of *Russia's* past, going back to the Middle Ages, "May you be inspired...by the gallantry of our great ancestors." At the end of the war he paid a special tribute to the Russian nation. The Soviet government, said Stalin in a very rare (for him) moment of candor, had made some mistakes before and during the first phase of the war. Any other nation would have made short shrift of the leaders who allowed such disasters to happen. But not the Russians!

Gratitude to Stalin took peculiar forms. It cannot be claimed that during the few years which remained to him, his Russian subjects were as a group treated better then those of other ethnic groups. But things went hard for those who to his suspicious eye appeared to denigrate Russia's past and culture. Some of them were "rootless cosmopolites," often Jewish in origin, who admired the false gods of the West; others the Ukrainian and Armenian, etc., writers and historians who failed to acknowledge that the annexation of their countries, even under the tsars, was "objectively" a progressive step, and that the achievements of their own nations had been possible only because of the unselfish fraternal help of the Russian nation.

Nationalism, Soviet in its external form, Russian in its actual content, was thus psychologically the strongest prop of Stalin's tyranny, and of course it remains the chief support of the Soviet system today. The average Soviet citizen has little use for the official ideology, yet can he entirely escape the stirrings of pride at the thought that his country has millions of followers and admirers all over the world? Perhaps things are not as clear-cut in this respect as they were before Maoism raised its ugly head. Still millions of Frenchmen, Italians, and others apparently and somewhat incomprehensibly envy his lot. A patriotic Russian may have a fairly realistic estimate of the system under which he lives and of his rulers. But would not any thoroughgoing liberalization of the Soviet regime lead inevitably to the claims for independence or at least genuine autonomy for the Ukraine, Georgia, etc.? What would then happen to Russia? Many, even among the dissidents, are unable to face forthrightly this question.

If nationalism helped the Soviet regime to survive, then terror in conjunction with nationalism enabled Stalin to retain absolute power, even at the end when he was a sick and apparently unbalanced man. It is often argued that the purges were irrational for they could not but convince the Soviet common man that his whole government, the highest officials included, was shot through with treason. But this was precisely the lesson Stalin was trying to inculcate: Only *he* was above suspicion, the rock and foundation upon which the whole system, the nation's unity and security, reposed. His closest subordinates must have been sorely tempted to get rid of the tyrant when he was unable to function during the first week of the German invasion. But they realized that with him gone, what was already a military disaster might turn into an irretrievable national catastrophe. Stalin's very crimes and errors rendered him indispensable. And many Soviet people, including some in the forced labor camps, cried on that March day in 1953 when they heard that Stalin was no more.

But if nationalism was such a crucial element in the Stalin cult, and terror its indispensable element, how can one explain his reputation abroad? Foreign Communists worshipped him as blindly as did the most fanatical member of the Communist Youth in Russia. Even more amazingly, people with no political or emotional links to Communism purported to see in him a wise father of his people, devoted to their welfare and devoid of personal ambition. "I have never met a man more candid, fair, and honest" wrote H.G. Wells in 1934. A lifelong student of Russia and a Fabian Socialist, Sir John Maynard wrote at the height of the purges: "[Stalin's] constitution of 1936 with the accompanying hints of a desire to construct a true democracy show that he has no successor in whom he is able to repose full confidence and that he seeks to protect his people against the consequences of a less able rule than his own." He has seen the future and it works, wrote Lincoln Steffens after his visit to the Soviet Union in the 1930s.

It would take a whole treatise to explore the question of why so many Western intellectuals can express disagreement with their own society mainly by embracing false and tyrannous idols. Perhaps the term "naiveté" has been overused in this connection. Perhaps it is especially a man of ideas, one with a highly developed critical faculty, who tends to become impressed by a man of action whose very personality appears to radiate self-assurance and power. It is instructive how with Stalin gone and his myth exposed, so many wanderers after Utopia professed to find it in Communist China with Mao as the new semi-god.

The Stalin period and his shattered legend are thus not only of historical interest. His legacy still weighs heavily on Soviet society. And many in the West still have not learned the lesson which Stalin's story epitomizes: Politics when turned into a religion spells tyranny. □

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Robert J. Maddox

Falling for the Fuehrer

"I only wish we had a man of his [Hitler's] supreme quality at the head of affairs in our country today."
—David Lloyd George, December 17, 1937

"If a mad dog makes a dash for my trousers,
I shoot him down before he can bite."
—Winston Churchill

Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933. He assumed this position through legal means, but quickly set about destroying the existing system. Within weeks he moved to crush opposition parties, unions, and all other organizations which threatened Nazi domination of the state. In the months following he also curbed or eliminated those individuals and groups within the Nazi coalition who sought to exercise any sort of independent influence. The most obvious example occurred during the "night of the long knives" in June 1934, when he purged the leadership of the SA (*Sturmabteilung*), or Brownshirts. The SA had helped Hitler gain power, but subsequently became an embarrassment to him and he doubted the organization's loyalty to his personal leadership. And of course there was his relentless persecution of Jews, the severity of which increased with each passing year (though the "final solution" awaited the coming of war). The Fuehrer, in short, was no softie.

Events in Germany were widely reported to the outside world. All the major powers had correspondents there: The United States was particularly well-represented by figures such as Edgar Mowrer, William L. Shirer, and Dorothy Thompson. An examination of American journals and newspapers of the time reveals detailed—and for the most part accurate—coverage of every Nazi excess. Information received through official channels was equally unsparing. The American ambassador to Germany, William E. Dodd, Jr., sent report after scathing report to Washington, permitting his superiors no doubt as to what was going on. As time passed, Dodd came to find Hitler so loathsome as to become physically ill after interviews with him.

The response in the United States was overwhelmingly anti-Nazi. Hitler's savagery was so well-documented that few dared to defend him—openly, at least. Those who praised him for one accomplishment or another usually qualified their remarks with references to the domestic situation. William Randolph Hearst, for instance, who had so unabashedly admired Mussolini, lauded Hitler for having saved Germany from going Communist. This "great achievement," Hearst stated in an interview, made the regime very popular with the German people. Still, Hearst noted, the regime was guilty of "very obvious and very serious mistakes." (1) Private admirers of Hitler and closet anti-Semites there undoubtedly were: Dodd himself noted in his dairy that during a visit to the United States he attended a dinner with, among others, a prominent senator who "talks like a National Socialist." (2) Table talk was one thing, speaking out in public another. In 1934 thousands of people crowded into Madison Square Garden to hold a mock trial of Hitler at the end of which the vote to convict was over 20,000 to 1. The lone dissenter, a young woman of courage if not good judgment, was escorted from the building for her own protection.

Avowedly pro-Nazi groups sprang up, but they never attracted large numbers. There was, for example, William Dudley Pelley's Silver Legion, better known as the Silver Shirts. Pelley was a mystic or, as one critic put it, "a spiritualistic nut," who claimed to have undergone a transcendental experience during the mid-1920s. Though unsure whether he had visited Heaven or Purgatory, he was certain that one night he had gone to where "humans go after being released." Upon his return he believed himself possessed with the ability to "tune in on the minds and voices of those in another dimension of being." A few years later one of these voices told him that a young Austrian would overthrow the "Legions of Darkness" and take control of Germany. "The Day that man ascends to the Chancellorship of the German people," said the voice, "take it as your timetable to launch your organization in America." He did. Despite such portentous origins, the Silver Shirts at their peak counted less than 15,000 members and Pelley himself was done in by the law (Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy, in his mind) for having diverted organizational funds for his own personal use. (3)

Fiscal irregularities also helped to undermine another of the more prominent pro-Nazi groups, the German-American Bund. Its leader, Fritz Kuhn, claimed no extraterrestrial help in leading an organization which grew so obnoxious that the German government had to disavow it. In 1939 Kuhn himself went to the slammer for having embezzled funds, portions of which were spent on his mistress, a Mrs. Kemp. Wags, of course, immediately dubbed her "Mein" Kemp. Though Kuhn had insisted that the Bund represented merely an intense form of "Americanism," his group never attracted a mass following. Nazism was so odious in the minds of most Americans that even the anti-Semitic Father Coughlin felt compelled to disavow any taint of "racial Hitlerism."

No such consensus existed regarding Hitler's foreign policies. To understand the variety of American reactions, one must keep in mind developments since World War I. That conflict, ostensibly fought to make the world "safe for democracy," had done nothing of the sort as Mussolini's rise to power in Italy made plain. Beginning in the mid-1920s, disillusionment over our participation in the war became widespread. A spate of books and articles appeared which attributed American entry to foreign intrigue or to the lust for profits of American munitions makers. To the long tradition of anti-British feeling in America was added the notion that we had "pulled their chestnuts out of the fire," and received only ingratitude as in British criticism of our insistence that they pay their war debts. Their default on payments, after the Depression began, confirmed this attitude. And the Depression itself tended to focus American attention on domestic problems rather than events in Europe.

Within this context American reactions toward German rearmament and other violations of the Versailles Treaty were marked above all by the strong determination that the United States must avoid involvement in European affairs whatever happened. The strength of this feeling can be seen in the successive neutrality acts passed by Congress between 1935 and 1939. A minority of Americans and Congressmen wished to apply such legislation

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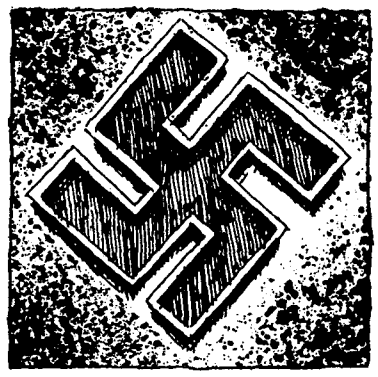
(arms embargoes, denial of loans, etc.) selectively, as a means of curbing aggressors. The majority, however, succeeded in having it drawn up in such a way as to apply to *all* combatants regardless of culpability. Our unneutral behavior toward Germany had gotten us into World War I, people said, and we must never repeat the mistake of taking sides.

An unlikely coalition of conservatives and liberals actually defended Hitler's apparent goals, if not his methods. Conservatives saw Communism as a greater threat to the West than Nazism, and looked upon Germany as a bulwark against the Reds. Anything which strengthened Germany, therefore, strengthened the West. Hitler's repeated denunciations of Communism (until the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939) raised the possibility of a conflict with Russia which might destroy Bolshevism at its source. Some liberals, on the other hand, while not anti-Soviet, justified Hitler's attempts to escape the restrictions of Versailles on the ground that it was a humiliating, repressive settlement. The liberal Senator from Idaho, William E. Borah, stands as a good example. He "understood" Hitler's behavior right along, including the annexation of Austria. "It was natural for Hitler to take Austria," he wrote on one occasion. "Austria was really a German state and the Versailles peacemakers had ruined, crippled and dismembered it ...I do not think the fact that he took Austria is nearly as serious as generally supposed." (4) As late as the summer of 1939, Borah insisted that talk of war was the concoction of British and French propagandists who wished for their own purposes to involve the United States in European affairs.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose conduct during the period 1939-41 would lead to charges that he pulled the United States into war, probably reflected the attitudes of most Americans through the 1930s. Though he told associates privately that he considered Hitler an "international gangster," he was unwilling to have the United States become involved officially. Washington remained silent when Hitler announced his plan for rearmament and when Germany took over the Rhineland, and put forward only the mildest protest at the time of Austria's annexation. As Robert A. Divine has pointed out, Roosevelt during this period spoke in the classic terms of isolationism. In the event of conflict, FDR stated in 1936, the only policy for the United States was strict neutrality, "and through example and all legitimate encouragement and assistance to persuade other Nations to return to the ways of peace and good-will." At the time of the Munich crisis he called upon all the leaders involved to work for a peaceful settlement, but also assured Hitler that the United States would "assume no obligations in the conduct of the present negotiations." (5) It was only after Germany's absorption of the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, that Roosevelt began moving tentatively to provide help for Great Britain and France should they become involved in war with Germany.



Thus the American response to Hitler's diplomacy was a mixture of ingredients: disillusionment over World War I, anti-British and anti-Russian sentiment, guilt feelings about the Versailles Treaty, the hope that each of Hitler's demands would be the last one, and above all, the very understandable desire to stay out of war regardless of its causes. Whether any steps the United States conceivably might have taken would have altered Hitler's behavior is conjectural, but certainly our passivity contributed to the spirit of appeasement in Great Britain and France.

France alone of the Western powers appeared willing to stand against Hitler—at least in the beginning. By 1934 the very able French Foreign Minister Jean-Louis Barthou was working to reach understandings with the Soviet Union, Poland, and the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia), as a means of curbing Hitler's ambitions. Barthou was assassinated in October of that year; and a combination of inept successors, deep internal cleavages within France, and British haste to appease Hitler, resulted in a deepening paralysis of French policy.

It was in Britain that large and influential numbers of otherwise responsible people reacted to Hitler during the 1930s as fatuously as leftists did to Stalin. The cluster of attitudes towards World War I and its aftermath which existed in the United States existed to an even greater degree in Great Britain—not surprisingly, in view of the losses she had suffered. There was one exception. Whereas many Americans held the British responsible for what had happened, Britishers themselves blamed France. France was responsible for the Versailles Treaty, ran a popular view, and it was from that vindictive settlement that almost all Europe's troubles had grown. French efforts to build alliances against a resurgent Germany, therefore, simply compounded the sins of Versailles instead of atoning for them. Some Britishers saw the treaty as the source of everything Hitler did, including his brutal domestic policies. As late as 1939 one British official wrote that "...a great many people including, I think, Mr. Chamberlain, felt that the internal persecution in Germany was in great part the result of the denial to Germany of the rights which every other sovereign nation claims." (6)

From this perspective the correct policy was not to oppose Hitler but to encourage him to throw off the restraints of Versailles. For it would only be when Germany had regained the stature and honor she deserved that a lasting foundation of peace could be built. The consequences of this approach had wide ramifications. German rearmament provides a good example. It was well known in England that Germany had been violating the arms restrictions provided for by the Versailles Treaty even before Hitler took power—and he speeded up the process. Not to worry, said some, for how could anyone ask Germany to *dis*arm before she had *re*armed? "The first condition," wrote Lord Lothian, "...is that we should be willing to do justice to Germany." (7) Presumably, having attained parity in arms, Hitler would then consent to "real" disarmament on the basis of equality. This thesis was echoed by a number of prominent journalists.

German territorial demands? Each one was greeted by the appeasers with the same answer: What Hitler wanted rightfully belonged to Germany or was necessary for her self-defense. The Rhineland was German, Austria was German, the Sudetenland was German. Czechoslovakia itself was a "corridor for Russia against Germany," according to one newspaper, and another stated that if Czechoslovakia became involved in war "the British nation will say to the Prime Minister with one voice: 'Keep out of it.' " (8) There was no need to fret: The Prime Minister himself (Neville Chamberlain) had no intention of risking conflict "because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing."

This desire to satisfy Hitler's every demand (sometimes before he even made them) was widespread within the British upper classes, the press, and the government itself. The *Times*, which reflected the views of and influenced all three groups, saw grounds for optimism in Hitler's every move. Some people considered the purge of June 1934 as evidence of Hitler's lawlessness. Not so, according to the *Times*, for "Herr Hitler, whatever one may think of his methods, is genuinely trying to transform revolutionary fervor into moderate and constructive effort and to impose a high standard on National-Socialist officials." (9) Its editor, Geoffrey Dawson, spared no effort to avoid giving the Germans offense. "I do my utmost, night after night," he wrote, "to keep out of the papers anything that might hurt their susceptibilities....I have always been convinced that the peace of the world depends more than anything else upon our getting into reasonable relations with Germany." (10) One of Dawson's methods was to rewrite or withhold the very accurate stories sent from Berlin by the *Times*' own correspondent, Norman Ebbutt.

Perhaps the most absurd comment ever made by an American diplomat (which is saying a great deal) was that Josef Stalin could not really be a tyrant because both dogs and children liked him.

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The habit of dismissing hard evidence in favor of personal impressions was elevated to a high art by the many British pilgrims who were granted audiences with the Fuehrer. Whether they expected to see him torturing kittens for amusement is not clear, but the fact that he often spoke in the most reasonable tones usually sent them off singing his praises. Arnold Toynbee returned from a one-and-three-quarter-hour visit "convinced of his [Hitler's] sincerity in desiring peace." (11) The journalist Vernon Bartlett came away from a forty-minute interview not only convinced of Hitler's peaceful nature but that he intended to get rid of the concentration camps "without much delay." What apparently struck Bartlett most, however, were Hitler's eyes: "so large and brown one might grow lyrical about them if one were a woman." The fact that Hitler's eyes were blue says something about the accuracy of Bartlett's reportage.

Perhaps the most pathetic case involved David Lloyd George, the elderly British statesman who had been Prime Minister during the Versailles negotiations. Invited to visit with Hitler, Lloyd George was struck almost to tears when he saw on Hitler's desk one framed photograph—of David Lloyd George! This and Hitler's repeated expressions of admiration for the man who had defeated Germany earlier, sent the old-timer away burbling in gratitude. A year later Lloyd George wrote to a friend of "the admiration which I personally feel for [Hitler]....I only wish we had a man of his supreme quality at the head of affairs in our country today." Such people went on being "convinced of Hitler's sincerity," A.L. Rowse has written, "until they were throttled black in the face." (12)

There are very few really wicked people in the world. There are a great many, however, who will ignore or [redacted] countenance in behalf of some ideal the most barbarous conduct of others. In the United States during the 1930s, such good liberals as John Dewey were denounced as "running dogs of fascism" by the Left for having concluded that reports of Stalin's purges were correct. Reality could not be permitted to intrude upon the ideal of the great socialist experiment. The appeasers in Great Britain wanted peace with Germany, also a noble ideal, and in pursuing it they were willing to distort and suppress facts they found uncomfortable, and to engage in the crudest sophistries to deny that which was growing increasingly apparent. Telling the truth about Hitler's Germany, one British official complained with bitter humor, "was to put the cat among the stool-pigeons." □

1. Quoted in Raymond Gram Swing, *Forerunners of Fascism* (New York, 1935), p. 34.
2. William E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd (eds.), *Ambassador Dodd's Diary* (New York, 1941), p. 212.
3. Geoffrey S. Smith, *To Save a Nation* (New York, 1973), p. 55ff.
4. Robert James Maddox, *William E. Borah and American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge, 1969), p. 235.
5. This and preceding quotation from Robert A. Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II* (Baltimore, 1969), pp. 8, 22. And see Arnold Offner's *American Appeasement* (Cambridge, 1969).
6. Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott, *The Appeasers* (London, 1963), p. 26.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
8. Both quotations from Franklin Reid Gannon, *The British Press and Germany, 1936-1939* (Oxford, 1971), p. 19.
9. A.L. Rowse, *Appeasement: A Study in Political Decline, 1933-1939* (New York, 1961), p. 30.
10. Gilbert and Gott, *Appeasers*, pp. 77-78.
11. Rowse, *Appeasement*, p. 38.
12. See Rowse, *Appeasement*, pp. 38, 46; and Gilbert and Gott, *Appeasers*, p. 50.

A. James Gregor

Mussolini and the Intellectuals

Many enthusiasts saw in the Duce *the hope of the century. They recanted only after a catastrophic war and political defeat.*

The story of how Western intellectuals responded to Benito Mussolini can give little satisfaction to anyone. It is a doleful tale fat with unhappy implications. But sometimes we are chastened by bitter experience, and so there might be some profit in rummaging about in our own all-too-recent intellectual past.

First of all, the list of intellectuals who publicly admired the *Duce* is both long and impressive. It includes such notables as Ezra Pound, Hilaire Belloc, George Santayana, Werner Sombart, Curzio Malaparte, Georges Sorel, George Bernard Shaw, Oswald Spengler, Rainer Maria Rilke, and T.S. Eliot, to mention only the most prominent and those who come immediately to mind. If we were to attempt to catalogue all those intellectuals, of whatever stature or renown, who at one time or another found Mussolini the object of their enthusiasm, we might well fill a volume as large as the telephone directory of New York City—for in Italy during the Regime, such intellectuals were almost as abundant as garlic cloves. One might recount how such intellectual luminaries as the poet Giuseppe Ungaretti could pen effusive poetry about the *Duce* —a *Duce* he "drew to his heart." Ungaretti could have those poems republished as late as 1942, only to discover after the fall of Fascism, that the men of the "left" had always been right and he, Ungaretti, had been egregiously in error about Mussolini. Or one might call to mind the case of Paolo Monelli, who during Mussolini's tenure, applauded, publicly and with some considerable frequency, the *Duce*'s "vast vision" and "boundless love" for Italy's land and people, only to discover after the war that Mussolini had always been a "petty-bourgeois despot." There were so many Italian intellectuals who saw only virtue in the *Duce* until 1943, or perhaps (if they were made of sterner stuff or located in the wrong part of Italy) until 1945, that a recitation that attempted to cite them all would be as unkind as it would be tedious.

But perhaps all that was the product of opportunism and careerism. Perhaps, under the dictatorship, Italian intellectuals could not pursue their trade without a Fascist passport. But even if such were the case, could the dictatorship impose the requirement that such intellectuals be *enthusiastic*, that they raise incantations to the wisdom, morality, providentiality, and historicity of the *Duce*? Was it really necessary for Curzio Malaparte to identify Mussolini as a "hero" larger than life? Surely intellectuals can be careerists or conformists, and they can be threatened, coerced, cajoled, and seduced. They can probably also be suborned—at remarkably little expense.

But few of the surviving Mussolini enthusiasts have ever

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pleaded that their behaviors were the consequence of coercion, conformity, or venality. Most have simply recanted, and repented the error of their ways. Which must needs discourage all of us. Given such confessions, to what can laymen make confident recourse in their search for defensible judgments about complex contemporary political and social issues? So many intellectuals, whose trade it is to think, have shown themselves to have been so profoundly in error, on so many issues, for so long a time, that laymen have every right to their confusion and consternation.

There were intellectuals—not few in number—who saw in Mussolini the hope of the century. And many of them were far outside the effective range of the Fascist secret police and were neither compromised nor corrupted. As a case in point, even if Ezra Pound were resident in Italy no one has suggested that his enthusiasm for Mussolini was anything other than the consequence of his own personal and studied conviction. Nor does anyone seriously imagine that George Bernard Shaw's defense of Mussolini was prompted by anything other than his own assessment of the man and the events within which he was protagonist.

Pound's ill-starred and public enthusiasm for the *Duce* was, and is, notoriously well-known. Mussolini surfaces in the *Cantos*, and Pound, to the best of my knowledge, remained forever his admirer. In 1959, when Vittorio Vettori asked Pound what he then thought of Mussolini, Pound answered, without a moment's hesitation: "A Great Man." Embarrassingly, Pound seems to have attached himself to Mussolini for all the wrong reasons. He was convinced that Mussolini was something of a closet money-crank—a little coy, perhaps, about going public, but a money-crank for all that—and he really believed that the *Duce* wanted to introduce social credit nostrums into Italy. Whatever the merits of Major Clifford Hugh Douglas' "social credit" schemes, there is absolutely no evidence that Mussolini ever took any of them seriously, and still less that Pound had anything more than the fuzziest notions about Fascist economics.

There is, in fact, very little of Mussolini in Pound's effusive *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*—but a great deal of Ezra Pound, who seems in celebrating Mussolini to have celebrated himself. For Pound, Mussolini was the pragmatic egalitarian cut in the mold of Thomas Jefferson. To my mind, Pound's tragedy was not that he admired the *Duce* with such unmitigated enthusiasm, but that what he found to admire most in Mussolini was probably not there at all. All of which is very sad. It is not so much that Pound was a "traitor"—it was that as an intellectual he was so profoundly confused.

Nor does this kind of confusion seem exclusive to Pound. Hilaire Belloc, for example, was convinced that Mussolini sought to free us all from the trammels of Jewish high finance. It is not so much that Belloc apparently admired in Mussolini that which most men of good will would count as foolish or barbaric, but that Belloc seems to have taken Mussolini's belated anti-Semitism more seriously that did the *Duce* himself, whose anti-Semitism was contrived and episodic and, at best, served only tactical purpose. There is very little evidence that Mussolini ever seriously believed that a "Jewish peril" threatened the world. But again, like Pound, Belloc seems to have espied in the mote in the *Duce*'s eye, the beam in his own.

Shaw's admiration of Mussolini was clearly less exotic than Pound's, but was hardly more substantial. In the series of exchanges with some of his contemporaries in the late twenties, Friedrich Adler and Gaetano Salvemini among them, Shaw has left us some transparent signs of howling ignorance about Italian affairs. In one place, Shaw suggested that the murder of the Socialist Giacomo Matteotti took place *before* the Fascist March on Rome. (When the Fascists reproduced Shaw's letter in Italy, they thoughtfully excised the anachronism.) But worse than that, as further evidence of intellectual inconsequentiality, the Shaw of 1927 was prepared to argue, in defense of Mussolini's rule, that *all* political systems were oligarchical and elitist. For Shaw, the difference between parliamentary democracy and Mussolini's regime turned *exclusively* on the fact that the "democracies" were hypocritical about their intrinsically non-democratic character, while Mussolini's Fascism was not.

We are all painfully familiar with the more contemporary analogues of that particular kind of argument. Our own surrogate proletariat of recent memory—the bourgeois student revolutionaries—made the same non-distinctions to much the same purposes, informing us that because our society harbored evidence of racism, there was little to distinguish "Amerika" from Nazi Germany. Such arguments, of course, are hopelessly flawed. It seems fair to say that Shaw's admiration of the *Duce* was, at least in part, a function of simple ignorance of relevant fact coupled with a singular shortfall in analytic sophistication.

That so acute an intellect should so falter suggests that it was not operating under full power. If Pound wished to see the money-crank, and Belloc perceived the serious anti-Semite in Mussolini, Shaw seems to have identified the *Duce* with the "Bringer of Order," the arch-enemy of anarchy. It would seem that the admiration of some intellectuals for Mussolini was as much a consequence of their personal *Weltanschauungen* as it was anything about Mussolini himself. This might well be said of Oswald Spengler or Winston Churchill. Spengler admired Mussolini the "conservative." Churchill admired Mussolini the "anti-Bolshevik."

Now it so happens that Mussolini was very little of a traditional conservative, and his anti-Bolshevism was of a very peculiar sort. Any political leader who constructs a political system that extends a central and unitary party control over economic, social, and religious life just short of that exercised by Stalin's Bolshevism in Russia hardly qualifies as a "conservative"—no matter how loosely the term is construed. And any political leader who takes satisfaction in recognizing the affinities shared by the system he has created and that put together by Stalin can hardly pass as a convincing "anti-Bolshevik." But intellectual enthusiasm apparently provides poor judgmental insight. Spengler continued to see only the "conservative" in Mussolini, just as Churchill continued to see him only in the guise of an "anti-Bolshevik."

Spengler's enthusiasm cooled somewhat when Mussolini made what Spengler considered the "fatal" tactical and political error of invading Ethiopia. Whether he ceased to consider Mussolini a "conservative" as a consequence remained obscure. Churchill's ardor abated, of course, with the advent of the Second World War. But with or without ardor, it seems that Churchill never ceased to conceive of Mussolini as the "anti-Bolshevik."

Some less prominent intellectuals, like James Strachey Barnes and Drieu La Rochelle, saw Mussolini either as the defender of the "Universal Roman Church" or as the architect of a "revolutionary socialism." That Mussolini had suppressed Catholic Action and significantly impaired the political capabilities of the Roman Church—that the Pope himself had directed Encyclicals against the impostures of the totalitarian state—had no apparent impact on Barnes' enthusiasm. That Mussolini had destroyed every vestige of socialist political or labor union activity on the Italian peninsula, and had been branded "renegade" by almost every living socialist, did nothing to deflect the enthusiasm of Drieu La Rochelle.

Nor did it disillusion Mario Missiroli, who in 1941 and 1942 could still extol Mussolini's wisdom in embarking on a "war of liberation" against the "plutocratic powers," only to discover, after the war, that Fascism was all corruption and wickedness.

Now it would seem reasonable, even to laymen, to expect that *some evidence* of Mussolini's disabilities might have made itself available during all those years between 1922 and 1945. If nothing else there was the ill-conceived and ill-contrived anti-Semitic legislation of the late thirties with which Mussolini saddled Italy as a consequence of the alliance with Hitler's Germany. But curiously enough, the *Duce*'s afflictions became apparent to the enthusiasts only after a catastrophically lost war and resounding political defeat. We are driven to suspect that many of them, consciously or unconsciously, accept the principle, articulated by the historian Gioacchino Volpe, that "Victory and defeat are like judgments of God. They indicate, in some measure and manner, where virtue and vice are to be found."

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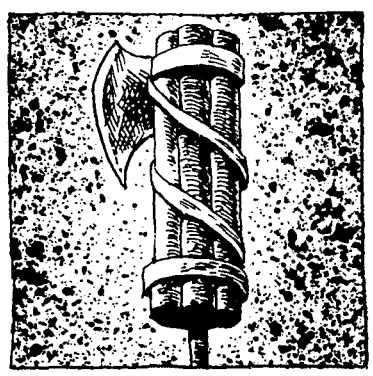
To disenchant enthusiasts, it thus seems to have required, in many cases, the most abject defeat in war. Only those mildly enthusiastic, like Shaw or Santayana, managed to disengage before the denouement. Many of the others, guided by their enthusiasm, marched unflinchingly to the end.

For the *true* enthusiasts, of course, not even catastrophic military or political defeat was sufficient to extinguish their intellectual passion. Pound suffered his enthusiasm until his death. Ivon De Begnac, and Giorgio Pini, two of Mussolini's "official" biographers, have continued to write for the few remaining Fascist nostalgics who remain on the Italian peninsula. Their postwar and post-Fascist works, it is true, are far less enthusiastic than those that went before, and it is clear they have paid the price of their enthusiasm. It is sobering and informative to read Pini's post-Regime biography and compare it with his earlier, "official" version. De Begnac's discursive account of his informal conversations with Mussolini, written after the war, adds dimensions to the figure of Mussolini not to be found in De Begnac's three-volume prewar biography. But whatever contribution such work makes to our knowledge of Mussolini, it is a contribution that is made late and at more than reasonable expense.

Most intellectual enthusiasts do not qualify as true enthusiasts. They seem to belong to the larger class of "survivors," who recant their enthusiasm after their hero has met unqualified defeat. Among them, there is a still more restricted subset that not only survives, but compulsively seeks out yet another *Doppelgaenger* in whom they might see themselves reflected. The moribund Malaparte's discovery of Mao Tse-tung is probably an instance of just that kind of transference as is Herbert Matthew's spoiled enthusiasm for Mussolini, and his subsequent discovery of Fidel Castro.



All of which suggests some rather sobering conclusions, however speculative and discursive: Admiring intellectuals are not very helpful at a time when political judgments become forced and momentous. At critical junctures in history, the enthusiasts seem to take up their respective positions. They pretend to see everything with a special clarity. Almost always, however, they must ultimately abandon their positions with considerable loss of credibility and at least as much loss of dignity.

For one thing, intellectual enthusiasts seem to discover virtues in their respective heroes that most of us are unable to detect. During the years of Mussolini's successes, Armando Carlini could write a dense monograph devoted to the "philosophy" in the "thought of Mussolini." Mussolini's intellectual pretentions, in fact, were exceedingly modest. By his own candid admission, he was no philosopher. Nonetheless, there were enthusiasts to be found who would celebrate his philosophic lucubrations. Albert Marohn could write an entire thesis comparing the thought of Mussolini to that of Friedrich Nietzsche.

In our own time the enthusiasts write books devoted to the "philosophic thought" of Chairman Mao—just as M.M. Rosental could produce an involved account of the "epistemology" of Stalin, and just as Richard Oehler and Alfred Baeumler could compose searching and illuminating accounts of Hitler's "philosophic" profundities. I wait in trembling anticipation for the first volume in English devoted to the "philosophy, epistemology, and metalogic" to be found in the stream of consciousness "thought" of Fidel Castro and Idi Amin.

Books devoted to the "thought" of such men constitute only special instances of adulation produced by the intellectual enthusiasts. Somewhat less exaggerated are the tomes devoted to the "political acumen," the "military strategy," the "prose style," and "poetry" of such "world historical" figures. Just as Adolf Dresler could generate almost two hundred pages extolling the special virtues of Mussolini's journalistic style and Francesco Sapori could inform us concerning the *Duce and Art*, we have seen major works on the singular competences of Mao's poetry and Stalin's economic planning.

It is always interesting to track the trajectories of this kind of enthusiasm. After the debacle, Paolo Monelli could discover that Mussolini's journalistic style, which he identified as "lapidary," "passionate," and "sage" in 1933, had become "petty-bourgeois" and "shallow" in 1950. Some of my colleagues reassessed, within the space of an undergraduate's career, the "profundity" of the "revolutionary thought" of Kwame Nkrumah —but only after Nkrumah was deposed.

We have few indices that would provide us predictive advantage in attempting to anticipate these shifts among enthusiasts. We must simply acknowledge them to be regularly recurring features of our intellectual environment. The only counsel past experience affords under such circumstances is a sober and cautious skepticism. In general, the cognitive content of such expositions is in direct and inverse proportion to the degree of enthusiasm they demonstrate.

Most men, whatever their station in life, are afflicted with all-too-human frailties, and it would seem that those frailties become increasingly onerous with the correlative increase in the amount of control they exercise over the lives and the freedoms of others. Most men in the West, laymen and intellectuals alike, seem to have accepted this, in principle, as one of the few regularities established by history. As a consequence, some of us do tend to be understandably skeptical about the profusions, penned by enthusiasts, that pretend to tell us something about the impeccable philosophical, humanistic, military, social, and political accomplishments of men like Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, Mao, or Castro. Were such men so clearly gifted, they would hardly have reason to so rigorously control the flow of information, to suppress dissidents so heavy-handedly, and to orchestrate public sentiment so assiduously.

When a single man, a "revolutionary" and "charismatic" leader, arrogates to himself the right to control our complex, confusing, and difficult lives, there always seem to be some who are prepared to applaud both his advent and his pretensions. For any number of reasons there always seem to be enthusiasts for whom this new "leader" is the answer to all the ills of our time. Their hero seems to have made social, political, and economic issues so seamless and tractable, cut so close to the enthusiast's own personal vision, that one can understand, anticipate and, consequently, discount their fascination.

Only in retrospect do we acquire a clear perspective on all this. We see the proposed images of the world, and the proffered characterizations of the men who dominated it at the time, as irretrievably impaired. We discover that the issues of those times were neither simple, nor were any of the solutions self-evident. The "revolutionaries" of the time who sought to resolve those issues with such self-assurance were hardly heroes—and the enthusiasts who entertained us with contemporary accounts of the revolutionaries' special virtues were wrong, more often than not.

For many enthusiasts, their special image of the world and their judgments about the special men who dominate it, are abandoned only when the dense reality of the world becomes so evident that even laymen can perceive it. It is only then that enthusiasts like Margherita Sarfatti remember the "Special Tribunals" that silenced, exiled, and sometimes killed the Leader's opponents. At that moment the Howard Fasts and the Lillian Hellmans remember the millions swallowed up in Stalin's death camps. We might even anticipate that the day will come when some of today's enthusiasts will remember the millions who died for the glory of Mao's revolution, just as Jean-Paul Sartre has begun to reflect upon the political prisoners in Castro's "correctional camps."

By that time, of course, laymen will have little need for the guidance that intellectuals are presumably expected to provide. And by that time many of the enthusiasts will have begun to pay the price for their cognitive failures: The survivors are condemned

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to make public display of their derailed judgment; the victims suffer and sometimes perish. Pound was the object of public opprobrium and imprisonment; James Strachey Barnes suffered ostracism and lonely death; and Drieu La Rochelle took his own life.

In the world's time of troubles, the enthusiasts bring laymen little more than confusion. It is difficult to gauge what real harm they do, but it seems reasonably clear that at such times they offer laymen little aid, less counsel, and still less responsible judgment. □

W.A.C. Adie

Mao: Poet and Hero

What separated Mao from the masses was an immense gulf of power, which is precisely what attracted his worshippers abroad.

"In history, after the death of a revolutionary thinker and leader...the oppressing classes lend his name a certain regard, in order to comfort and fool the oppressed masses; at the same time, however, they mutilate the contents of the revolutionary theory...destroy the revolutionary vanguard and vulgarise [the revolution]."—V.I. Lenin, *State & Revolution*.

Mao Tse-tung was born on Boxing Day, 1893 in landlocked Hunan province. It might be better to say that he was cast ashore, for he was never quite at home on land. He preferred swimming. The moment he died, other politicians and pontiffs of the media broke into an ecumenical chorus of unprecedented praise. With Mao, said French President Giscard d'Estaing, *s'eteint un phare de la pensée mondiale*; for Kissinger, too, he was a Titan of our time. As for scholars and gentlemen, Professor John King Fairbank, doyen of China-gazers, attacked the press for talk of power struggle among "dedicated revolutionaries": "Unlike us China has no crisis of inflation, unemployment, crime or corruption...Ford vs. Carter is a more naked power struggle than anything going on in Peking." There, of course, the less scholarly and gentle Hua Kuo-feng and the "Gang of Four" (led by Mao's widow, Chiang Ching) were indeed locked in a power struggle; and the victorious Hua released quite enough details to belie Fairbank's assertion. Such claims as his exemplify a peculiar sort of myopia which has caused otherwise intelligent men to attribute a unique moral superiority to Mao and his China.

It is precisely this problem which merits attention from the society that exposed Watergate, and which Professor Edward Luttwak recently raised in *Commentary* after taking one of those farcically stage-managed tours of China. That is, why do so many distinguished journalists and scholars, including veteran Sinologists, systematically rationalize (and even dissemble) when it comes to Mao and China, encouraging 1) a right-wing Sinophilia of those who abhor what they think they know of the system, but for the same reasons think it necessary to "balance" Russia, and 2) an equally flawed Sinophilia of those "who see inherent virtue in a society which combines a maximum of unfreedom with a maximum of inefficiency"?

This lacquering of Mao's image has been done both abroad and within China. For the balance-of-power delusion, see Leibniz—he was glad God put the rough Muscovites between China and Europe, so we could gradually grind them fine. But, as Chief of Staff Lo Jui-ching summed it up before he was broken in the Cultural Revolution, China's military forces add up to nothing more than a "heap of meat" in comparison to those of the USSR; and under Mao they were even falling behind technologically. The Mao-the-Good-Shepherd delusion is much more interesting and complicated. Here, we can only scan a few specimens of what has been said about him by those who should have known better, and quote some of the reams of evidence to the contrary, much of it from the dragon's own mouth, which refutes the prevailing hagiography and which fashionable China charlatans have never, it seems, set eyes on.

We approach Mao through minefields of fallacies. To begin with, it is absurd to praise or blame him for *everything* that went on in China after he declared the People's Republic in 1949. It is also absurd to compare the Communists' achievements (as is usually done) with the chaos of 1949, which they had a hand in creating. Some of the recent "expert" accounts of "the real China" are reminiscent of what people wrote in the thirties after visiting Manchuria under the Japanese (such an improvement over the Warlords), not to mention the admiring reports about Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin. Then, as now, one finds a streak of power-lust and racism disguised as concern for humanity *in the abstract*: Victims of alienation—most notably intellectuals—find it intensely satisfying to identify with those awesome movers of men who are able to "guide" so many individuals "for their own good," and find it appalling that we would try to foist our Greco-Roman-Judaeo-Christian ideas of democracy and freedom and dignity on "swarming" Asiatics.

Hence, there is an almost irresistible tendency to construct a false dichotomy between material progress and socio-political development. As the "left"-Maoist "Gang" used to complain, when the Sputnik goes up, the Red Flag falls to the ground. "So arises the dilemma," goes another version, "who can strike the balance between freedom from starvation for the majority against freedom of thought for the minority?" Even Mao rejected this formulation when he told André Malraux "we're no longer eating bark, but we've only got to one bowl of rice a day; *to accept revisionism is to throw away the bowl of rice*." By "revisionism" he meant a "bloodsucking bureaucrat class" (his words) oppressing the masses—as officially existed during the ascendancies of Liu Shao-chi, Lin Piao, Teng Hsiao-ping, and the "Gang," i.e., for most of the time since the People's Republic was established.

Unluckily, Mao was temperamentally and intellectually incapable of diagnosing the causes of this Soviet-type oppression and so he could not find a cure; he was also (as he put it) "a complete outsider when it comes to economic construction [and understood] nothing about industrial planning"—but that was a lesser failing. His officially and unofficially published works and other Party documents reveal him to be full of unresolved "contradictions," like the Party and China themselves. Above all, he was unclear about how to achieve a stable balance or synthesis of anarchy and authority. In his words, he was part monkey and part tiger. In fact, he alternated these roles like the dynastic cycle of Chinese history itself (unification-decay/rebellion-reunification by a new dynasty).

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Sublimely ignoring Mao's own disclaimers, the obituaries made him a man of peace, a builder. Earlier enthusiasts saw him feeding and clothing the millions, and compared him to George Washington (Senator Charles Percy) or Woodrow Wilson (Edward Friedman). But Felix Greene deserves quotation at length:

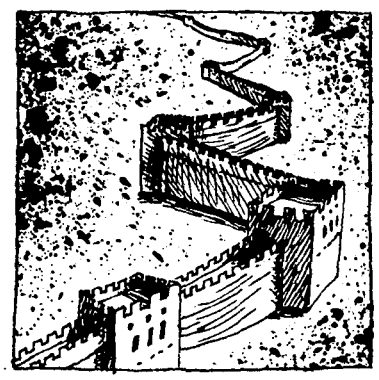
> ...Mao Tse-tung is not surrounded by yesmen fearful of arousing his displeasure. *We are not dealing with a Hitler or Mussolini, or latter-day Stalin*...China is being led by historically conscious, strong and enormously competent men who as far back as the 1920s identified themselves with the people and knew their needs [italics added].

There was, says Greene, no "jockeying for power" at the top in China. And the people at the bottom have an idea of human dignity and freedom different from ours; they are interested in freedom to eat, to have schools and barefoot doctors, and "to look at the future with hope." Or, as Joan Robinson revealingly put it in 1972:

> The success of the Chinese economy in reducing the appeal of the money motive is connected with its success in economic development...when there is complete social security at the prevailing level of the standard of life and employment for all, then it is possible to appeal to the people *to combat egoism and eschew privilege* [italics in original].

What does the factual record say about Mao's style of leadership and its results for economic and political development?

> So I am supposed to have reached "the declining years of Stalin" and to have been "arbitrary and dictatorial," not granting "freedom" and "democracy"; I am supposed to be "vain" and "pompous" and one-sided in accepting and trusting some of you; also I am supposed to "let followers go to extremes," also I "will not turn around until the wrong has reached its end," and "once I change, I make a complete turnabout," having deceived you, "drowning you like fishes" and "resembling Tito." No one was supposed to be able to talk before me except you leaders. The situation is so bad that only you people can rescue it.



Thus Mao, throwing his "comrades' " words in their teeth in 1959, acted the victim of disloyalty in order to turn them all against Defense Chief Marshal Peng, who had candidly warned of the dangers to Party and state arising from Mao's "Great Leap" policies of top-speed social and economic transformation. Under Peng's successor, Lin Piao, a military team investigating the resulting famine and unrest recommended exploiting the grassroots grievances to try and restore central control: Leaders "who witnessed or heard the deplorable incidents of oppression forced on the innocent labouring masses would weep if they had any feeling towards the Party and the proletarian class." Ten years later, Lin himself wrote in his coup manifesto (as officially circulated by Mao after, as Chiang Ching put it, he had "applied a drop of disinfectant and Lin was finished"):

> Today B52 [read: Mao] woos A and strikes B, tomorrow he will woo B and strike at A. Those who are wooed by his blandishments today will be put to death for undetermined crimes....His secretaries have either committed suicide or been arrested: his few close comrades-in-arms and confidants he also sent to prison...he is suspicious and sadistic...once he thinks someone is his enemy, he is determined to treat that person as a sworn foe and blame all evil deeds on him. Frankly, all those whom he dropped one after the other...are actually substitutes for the crimes he committed himself.

Lin, as I said at the time and the Chinese confirmed years later, inflated the Mao cult with the hope of floating him up out of the way. In this Lin was smarter than Liu Shao-chi, who had prepared a dossier for the 7,000-cadre conference of January 1962 to show why Mao was responsible for the economic disasters, but dared not use it to bring him down completely because the survival of the Party empire depended on Mao's personal prestige. This was the real dilemma of the regime.

As for material development, World Bank figures for 1974 show mainland China, in the temperate zone and possessing the most numerous workforce on earth, with a GNP of $300 per head and a growth rate from 1960 to 1974 of 5.2 percent: better than India but worse than Thailand, Malaysia, many African countries, and all Latin American countries except Bolivia; not to mention Taiwan with $810 and 6.5 percent, or Singapore with $2,240 and 7.5 percent, or Japan. Such figures don't tell us, though, what each average "head" actually gets. In the People's Republic since 1949 industry has grown to account for about half of GNP, but much of this is related to defense. Agriculture has been held back by a preference for mass mobilization over investment and free enterprise, though prices have at times been adjusted to let the rural sector buy more industrial products for less of its own, and taxes on it have been reduced. Wages have risen little since 1950—one reason for the increasing strikes and riots these last years—and the rural majority of the population does not receive set wages but rather a share, based on "work points," of what the collectives have left after paying taxes and making compulsory deliveries to the state. In any case, what little money the people see is useless without the ration cards and permits required for non-trivial purchases and travel. This is the real difference between the People's Republic and comparable societies such as Taiwan. Even on Greene's argument, the low level of actual consumption of the bicycles, watches, sewing machines, and other goods that the Chinese long to own cannot reconcile them to what Mao called "revisionism," what three ex-Red Guards called "feudalistic social-fascist autocracy" (in a famous wall-poster of 1974 in Canton), and what the present regime blames on the "Gang of Four"—the system by which the people spies on and bullies itself under threat of "reform through labor camps" (and worse) for the benefit of those "new bourgeois" (Party cadres) who are not themselves undergoing "class struggle" in kangaroo court or in Red Guard torture chamber, or hard labor under masses' surveillance or in prison.

In 1956-59, Mao set the adult intelligentsia and the Party managers to "rectify" each other—in that order. The "hundred flowers" of criticism were crushed by an "anti-Rightist" campaign, and the Party emerged stronger than ever. All attempts to organize a rural counterforce through Maoist "education" and alternative peasant organizations were sidetracked by the Party apparatus (including Unions and Youth League): Mao turned back to the city, to the new-generation students and workers. In 1966-69, their Cultural Revolution smashed the Party for him, but the Generals emerged as winners—a step back to 1949, as Chou En-lai said. Between the deaths of Marhsal Lin (1971) and Premier Chou (1976), a start was made by reshuffling commanders from their fiefs, dismantling their cardhouse of a co-Shogunate, and easing China onto the road Japan took with the Meiji Restoration in 1868; but factional struggles diverted the accompanying mass movements into a repeat of 1966-69.

These upheavals threw up massive evidence that China's "masses" know as well as we do that freedom to eat and to speak go together; the thousands who swam to Hong Kong or crossed into the USSR preferred the unknown to a "security" too close to that of the prisoner, conscript, or monk. As Lord Macartney reported in 1794:

> ...we find that the boasted moral institutes of China are not much better observed than those of some other countries, and that the disciples of Confucius [read: Mao] are composed of the same fragile materials as the children of Mammon in the western world.

The documents also show that Mao did more than anyone to *prevent* China from developing as Japan did. Part of the reason was that his "guerilla style" was all right for capturing the cities, but not for running them. But the real cause lies in the origins of Mao's style and its convergence with the evolution of the Party in its struggle to survive. →

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It is not true, as is often alleged, that Mao founded or invented the Chinese Communist Party, the Red Army, and peasant guerilla warfare, or contributed significantly to Marxist-Leninist theory. Chen Tu-hsiu set up an *ad hoc* Central Committee of the Party in Shanghai in May 1920. In September 1920, Mao was still agitating for the independence of Hunan Province; he was only a delegate to the first Congress in 1921. While the Communists formed a "bloc within" the Nationalist (KMT) Party he rose to alternate member of its Central Committee. But when Chiang Kai-shek put a bloody end to their game, Mao joined Chu Teh who did start a Red Army in the hinterlands, and the strength of the movement shifted to traditional outlaws rather than urban workers. In December 1930, according to Party documents, Mao killed thousands of Communist cadres as "anti-Bolsheviks" (i.e., opposed to him), finally gaining military control of what ended up as the party-in-arms' main body during the Long March of 1935. Chang Kuo-t'ao, who led the rival column, said Mao betrayed his route to the pursuing Nationalists in order to have him eliminated. Similarly, Mao used his troops and agitators in government-controlled cities and units to provoke war between Japan and the Nationalist Government, as proposed in a Party document of 1927 (not his). This prevented Chiang Kai-shek from eliminating Mao, and permitted Mao to develop "people's war" to "resist Japan"—but take China. (As he later liked to tell apologetic Japanese visitors, he owed his victory to Japan.) This characteristic ploy of managing a three-cornered combat by expediently combining "unity and struggle" (let's you and him fight) is a key to Mao's ambivalent character, dialectical philosophy, transitional role in history, and self-defeating policies.

Born when and where he was, Mao, like Heraclitus, had reason to think that change and uncertainty are the only things one can be sure of. Compensation for fear of being let down by flesh and blood may explain his "dropping" over the years of brother, children, third and perhaps fourth wife, not to mention comrades-in-arms, and ending up "alone with the masses." From childhood on, Mao's world was one to chop, chew, and change: his way, to act ruthless (tiger), unpredictable (monkey), and first; to pick one paper-tiger "common enemy" at a time to unite a band of rebels against, dramatizing himself as victimized leader of the artificial, permanent "class struggle" which would cement the unity of the chosen, the "proletariat." Mao was obsessed with struggle, continually striking out as if swimming on people (see his poems). As philosophy, this becomes Contradictions Theory similar to the pre-Socratic doctrines and the Chou dynasty Book of Changes (1150 B.C.)—everything is, i.e., can be, split into two and so can be absorbed piecemeal. Eat them before they eat you, that's materialist dialectics! The trouble was that the discarded enemies and the swallowed proletarians (or "people") get defined by their relation to Mao; he didn't believe that one could test out (e.g., by elections) what the "mass line" really is.

Mao was ambiguous on his cult. He deprecated it to his wife in 1966 and to Edgar Snow, yet he argued that Khrushchev fell for lack of one and that "members of a squad must worship the squad leader"—because, like Stalin, "he has truth in his hands." Here we have it; Mao, his own Principle Contradiction: He was another of those would-be modernizers of the 1920s, too "Confucian" an anti-Confucian to grasp that scientific truth is the product of skepticism, tolerance, suspended judgment—in a word, uncertainty—and not a spell to pacify anomie, fix relationships, and dam *Luan* (chaos). Holed up in remote Yenan after the Long March, Mao adapted his chop-change method of "rectification" to bring under control the "mountaintop" feudalities of which his bandit Party consisted. Under cover of "Sino-izing Marxism-Leninism" and "rectifying" Soviet-influenced cadres, Mao substituted his personal authority, rationalized as his Thought (an open-ended series of oracles), for the codified foreign doctrine which had hitherto legitimized the Party. So, back came traditional attitudes to leadership and social order, with Mao as the infallible Teacher-patriarch capable of withdrawing legitimacy from the actions of subordinates for "misapplying his policy" and coming temporarily between him and the "hoodwinked masses," whose will ("mass line") he—rather than the collective wisdom of the Party—axiomatically incarnated.

In March 1942, Soviet-returned Party veteran Wang Shih-wei wrote a series of articles in the Party organ *Liberation Daily* exposing the development, in the safety of the revolutionary base at Yenan, of a privileged Party hierarchy such as could not exist in other beleaguered strongholds, where what the Nazis called the "front-experience" kept comrades and allies together. Soon Mao counterattacked with his "Yenan Talks," while Wang was set up as the usual scapegoat against whom the rest could "struggle," "unite" with Mao, and survive. Wang was killed before Yenan was abandoned to the Nationalists in 1947. The system of "teaching a lesson" or rectification by "struggle" or "unity-criticism-unity" (bullying sessions) was institutionalized as a para-superstitious weapon to divide and control families and all other family-substitute small groups (*hsiao-tsu*), such as squads and offices and especially cellmates in prison and POWs. It was perfected as a method of "turning round" and enlisting the latter, but Mao sought to apply the system after 1949 to the entire population (see his rescript on correct handling of contradictions among the "people" in 1957).

But by then, it was clear that the neo-primitive, alternative society Mao had been able to synthesize in Yenan could not be scaled up to suit China's size, or its cities; the warrior-farmer People's Liberation Army could only do everything when all was very simple. The spurious solidarity of the small groups depended on continually reviving the frontline stress by "mass movements" and ritualistic scapegoating of "5-black elements" with "bad class origin"—losers dubbed "counter-revolutionaries" or "property owners"—whose outcast status was like that of the Jews in Nazi Germany or, as Peking Red Guard Research Group put it, the blacks in the U.S.A. Mao wanted to avoid Stalin's economic mistakes and not kill too many people; "unlike leeks, their heads wouldn't grow again." But he saw himself first and last as a Teacher, as he told Snow. What he taught came from the outlaws' tradition, the "University of the Greenwoods," he said; but since it was dogma that he "knew the people's needs," the appearance of a gap between him and them and/or a change of "line" had to be blamed on some anti-People who had infiltrated the People, to be unmasked by fresh "study" of the true (new) meaning of the mantras—those in the Red Book were even recited backwards—and sent down for "re-education through labor." Marxism means "Rebel!"—against anti-Maoists.

Stalin created a Gulag Archipelago, but Mao's regime perfected a convict or rather reformatory continent. It was the Imperial pattern of a great schoolroom, with the innovation that the orphans policed each other against growing up, and ensured total dependence on the father/mother officials (the "gun in the heart") by a modernized "rectification" system that differed only in intensity between prison and "society." Then with the Cultural Revolution (1966-69) Mao knocked it all down, like the man who burned down the house to get roast pork, briefly co-opting the tyranny of chaos. In all this, millions died by execution, in labor camps (15 million), in Red Guard struggle meetings and factional battles, by being driven to suicide, by drowning while escaping, etc. Meanwhile, the privileged few, as in 1942, had "special food, special clothing," and now, "special cars" too, separated from the masses by an immense gulf of *power* rather than property. This, I fear, is precisely what attracted the Mao-worshippers.

Mao liked to compare himself to the tyrant who first united China in 221 B.C. ("he only buried 460 literati, we buried 46,000!"), and had the Great Wall built by forced labor. It warms the socialist heart to identify with the thirty grades of commissars in their blue camouflage as they mobilize the masses to do by *corvée* what could better be done by letting them go in for free enterprise, sell on a market, and buy machinery to dig their waterworks. But then this would not further the half-conscious hankering not just to roll back industrialization, as the "Gang of Four" did, but to get back to the age before metal and money and so, eventually, with the votes in the hands of the Many, put the world

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upside down. Since Herodotus, China has best fulfilled the need for a happy land as far, far away in space and time as the spiritual émigré felt from his own society.

Throughout, Mao and his band may have honestly been out to modernize China. Earlier reformers had debated whether to rely on material modernization or socio-political changes. One side of Mao and the "rightist" factions chose the former and ended up rationalizing the 8-grade wage-scale, town-country and other kinds of polarization, techno-bureaucracy, and professionalism by the requirements of production and defense-security. The logical result was "revisionist" oppression. On this side the Communists inherited the aims of the last great Mandarins of the Empire, who tried to save it through railways, arsenals, and Western-style development which was precisely its poison. With his other side and the "leftist" factions Mao unravelled, as much as he wove it, the Sino-Stalinist synthesis of modern and foreign techniques with millennial and Chinese political culture. The old argument that cultural and political change was primary ended up caricatured in such forms as "factories are to produce revolutionized people rather than goods" (Lin) and "rather socialist trains late than revisionist punctuality" ("Gang of Four"). Such slogans rationalized a last-ditch struggle, in the manner of the last Dowager Empress, by ideologist-bureaucrats to stay (as they said during the anti-Teng campaign) "on top" at all costs, while pretending to give priority to "class struggle" against the new-rising technocrat class. The logical conclusion was Luddism, if not the annihilation of 2,000 years of Cambodian history.

For a few days during the Cultural Revolution, Paris Communes did appear, probably in accordance with the original vision of Mao and some of his "radicals," but they were dropped, mainly because "Communes are too weak when it comes to suppressing counter-revolution." Now the Party's over. Confucius wanted Gentlemen and got Players. China sought a Teacher and got a nanny but, as a dissident said during Mao's 1957 attempt to "solve contradictions" by the "hundred flowers" movement, "the child is getting big and Nanny [i.e., the Party] will be out of a job." It could be that Mao's real claim to fame has been to hold China back, thus sparing the world upheavals, of which the rise of Japan from 1868 to Pearl Harbor would have seemed a mere *kriegspiel* in miniature. According to Sun Yat-sen, father of Chinese nationalism, when the British tried to get him to join in World War I he refused, because that would have led China to develop military forces of several millions, making it far more dangerous than Japan. "If we followed your suggestion...then the whole world, including your country, would probably fall prey to China's arms."

Hua's press has explained that the Great Disorder Mao said would bring in a Great New Order was strictly for *chez l'ennemi* and not for periodic purges of Chinese revisionists (as hitherto believed), and that those who are for nonstop revolution and against socialism in one country are Trotskyites. Party moguls may reimpose "order" on the young workers, but they will be hard to keep down on the prison farm after witnessing the Commune. As they riot and form resistance groups, many use slogans about Mao's heirs, Chou, and Teng, or "socialist legality" because they are too "Maoist" anti-Maoists to know another vocabulary. The Cantonese authors of the wall-poster cited above have reportedly been arrested; but the southern Generals are restive too. Abroad, Maoists are beginning to abandon their dead god. Goodnight, sweet-sour Machiavelli. What cheer, Kim Il-sung? □

Victor Baras

Triumph of the Wall

Life in East Germany today.

On August 13 of each year, East Germany commemorates the anniversary of the construction of the Berlin Wall. The authorities do not just let the day pass in silence; they really celebrate—with public festivities, a parade, all the trappings of a national holiday. During last year's celebration East German television showed schoolgirls presenting flowers to uniformed border guards while the voice-over boasted, "The children of the German Democratic Republic love their idols and heroes, the defenders of the state border." And in fact, the rulers of East Germany have good reason to be happy with their Wall. The "proper securing of the state border," as the official journal *Neues Deutschland* described it, has enabled the GDR to become the most prosperous Communist country in the world. East Germany today is the only place where one can see something like what Marx had in mind: the productive capacity of an advanced industrial society linked more or less successfully to a system of public ownership. Marx, after all, intended his revolution to take place in Germany.

The East German regime is repressive, even by the standards of Soviet Eastern Europe; the government is kept in power by the presence of 300,000 Russian troops. East Germans know, better than anyone, that the "anti-fascist defense wall" was built not to keep fascists out but to keep East Germans in. They know that their standard of living, the highest in the Soviet bloc, does not approach that of their West German cousins. Yet life in the German Democratic Republic is incomparably "better" today than it was before the construction of the Wall—if one ignores the fact that people are no longer free to leave—and the improvement has come about largely *because* of the Wall.

The Wall had two vitally important consequences for the GDR. First, of course, it stemmed the outflow of population. Until 1961, when the Wall was built, the GDR had been the only Soviet-bloc country whose borders were not totally sealed against escape. East Germany, a country of seventeen million people, lost some three million of its best educated and most vigorous citizens through the open border in Berlin before 1961.

The second consequence is less widely appreciated. The construction of the Wall led, after an initial period of unrest, to a tremendous improvement of *morale* in the GDR; or, to be more precise, it produced a marked decline in the general level of grumbling. For most East Germans, the Wall appeared to confirm the futility of overt dissent.

In recent years there has been some confusion in the GDR

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resulting from the "freedom of movement" provisions of the Helsinki agreement. This has led to a sharp increase in the number of East Germans requesting permission to leave the country, and the authorities are just now beginning to retaliate against the applicants. The government will do whatever is necessary, as it did in 1961, to prevent free emigration; for the stability of the GDR requires that its citizens accept the fact that they are all in it together—irrevocably.

On this basis the regime has reached an accommodation of sorts with the East German people. The authorities tend to keep quiet about little things, like long hair, blue jeans, and watching West German television (a universal practice even before it was sanctioned by First Secretary Erich Honecker in 1973), and the people keep quiet about big things, namely politics.

When I first visited East Berlin in 1964, the country was still smarting from the construction of the Wall. I was accosted frequently by black marketeers, East Germans eager to talk about the West, and malcontents who just wanted someone to complain to. Police spies were everywhere, or at least people thought they were, and every conversation involved much looking over the shoulder. Crossing from West to East Berlin was as unpleasant as the East German authorities meant it to be. On one visit I was stripped to my shorts as part of a "routine" inspection. On another occasion a customs official tried to pry open my metal token from a West German university dining hall.

Now, thirteen years later, the millions of visitors from East and West who pass through East Berlin every year arouse no visible interest. On my most recent visit, last summer, I did not even attract black marketeers. The government has co-opted the small-time black market, which is what the other East European countries did long ago. That is, all East Germans are now permitted to possess small amounts of Western currency, no questions asked, which they may spend in the specially stocked "Intershop" stores previously reserved for foreigners and the East German elite.

West Berliners and West Germans have also made their peace with Intershop. In the 1960s, Westerners who patronized these East German "hard currency" stores were still considered virtual traitors by their countrymen. Nowadays there is no ideological stigma attached to stocking up on tax-free American cigarettes, Scotch whiskey, or French perfume in the GDR. The Intershops along the Berlin *autobahn* do a brisk business, as does the shop at the *Friedrichstrasse* terminal in East Berlin. *Friedrichstrasse* is the only station in the East that is directly accessible by subway from the West, and the store there is located outside the customs barrier; Western passengers can come in, do their shopping, and return home without passing through East German border formalities.

Even crossing the border at Checkpoint Charlie is not the Cold War drama it used to be. The sleepy MP station on the American side offers no reminder of the day in 1961 when Soviet and American tanks stood nose to nose across the barricade there. Long gone is the warning sign urging American civilians to register for their own safety before entering the Soviet sector. The Wall itself is still a shocking sight, but it is now sleek and white, and electronic wizardry has replaced the broken glass and barbed wire of earlier days. The rubble of abandoned buildings has been cleared out of no-man's land; in its place are neat rows of tank traps, a patrol road, and some manicured lawn. Since the border is now essentially impenetrable, the guards are less nervous and not so heavily armed as before. Foreign travelers are processed expeditiously, with only occasional spot checks to confirm the accuracy of currency declarations. The biggest nuisance at the border is the large number of travelers—Western tourists as well as Turks, Yugoslavs, and Arabs working in West Berlin—who clog the customs office.

On my visits to East Berlin last summer, I was struck by the relative quiet of that part of the city. There are fewer cars than in the West, fewer pedestrians, and no hucksters at all. (The sidewalks of West Berlin, by contrast, are cluttered with every kind of entrepreneur and crank, including abrasive young radicals armed with bullhorns and handbills. These Communist agitators are mercifully absent in the East.)

There are, needless to say, no panhandlers in East Berlin, neither street artists nor beggars. The GDR is a welfare state in which everyone has (and must have) a job; unemployment and "parasitism" are illegal. Nor are there peddlers on the streets. Retail trade in East Germany is handled by state bureaucracies, which means that one sees customers trying to buy rather than merchants trying to sell.

Shops in East Berlin are reasonably well stocked, although there are too few of them. The variety of merchandise is limited, quality is uneven, and the availability of any particular item is utterly unpredictable. It is not uncommon to find a hot dog stand without hot dogs or a tavern without beer. This is true even in the showplace area around the *Alexanderplatz*, where the stores are always jammed with shoppers from all over the country and from neighboring Poland. (Shopping junkets from Poland are a source of constant irritation to many Germans, who accuse the Poles of making the lines longer and the shelves barer in the GDR.)

East Germans are well dressed, and fashions are about the same as in the rest of Europe, with the exception of women's undergarments, which have obviously not progressed to the "free spirit" stage. In contrast to my earlier visits, I was generally unable last summer to distinguish Western tourists from East Germans by their clothing. But my East German acquaintances could still do it. They explained, "We know what is available in our stores. Anything we don't recognize is from the West."

In general, East Berlin today makes an impression of great stability and stolidity—a law-and-order man's dream. It is a city of shops, offices, restaurants, and lines of people waiting patiently to be served. It is a city of reassuring and depressing ordinariness.

Propaganda posters, while less numerous than before, are still jarring in their crudeness. Especially striking is the effusive praise of the Soviet Union. Brezhnev is featured on the walls of East Berlin almost as prominently as Honecker. A popular joke has it that when the East German Academy of Sciences offered a prize for the best book on African wildlife, the winning entry was *The Soviet Elephant is our Idol.*

The press, prominently displayed at sidewalk kiosks, is even more strident than the wall posters in denouncing West Germany, Israel, and the United States—in that order. (The Chinese, of course, also come in for rough treatment.) Official rhetoric in the GDR is militant to the point of militarism, and it bears no apparent relation to the real concerns of the country's citizens.

I was especially struck by this contrast on one sunny afternoon in early June, when I found myself in the middle of the closing ceremonies of the national "parliament" of the Free German Youth, the Communist youth organization. The festivities were held in the shady expanse of *Unter den Linden*, between the Opera and the university. While professional "youth leaders" from the GDR and the Soviet Union (including the familiar thick-necked types approaching middle age and a career in the secret police) delivered harangues on international revolutionary solidarity, the thousands of blue-shirted young people acted as if they were on vacation, which they were. They knew when to cheer, but except for that they were anything but attentive. Some of them played cards. Others listened to rock music from West Berlin on transistor radios. There was a good deal of flirting and altogether too much smoking of cigarettes. When the speeches finally ended and the *apparatchiks* retired to their private banquets, the young people stayed for an open-air concert on the *Alexanderplatz*, where the more drunk among them stripped to their underwear and frolicked in the public fountains.

All of this happened within a ten-minute walk of the Wall. But why should that have dampened anyone's spirits? Why should a young East German, in the capital for an enjoyable weekend, bang his head against the Berlin Wall?

There is one public place where one can hear East Germans talk about the Wall, or how they avoid talking about it. That's the East Berlin side of the Brandenburg Gate, just around the corner from the American Embassy. Since the Gate is the traditional symbol of the city of Berlin, the authorities permit people to gather there and even to take photographs, although the Wall, which runs right

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along the Gate, is normally off limits to photographers.

The Brandenburg Gate straddles *Unter den Linden*, or rather it used to. That broad boulevard now stops abruptly several hundred yards before the boundary. The end of the thoroughfare is marked by a modest roadblock and signs warning that the well kept lawn ahead is a restricted border zone, not to be entered without a special pass. Passes are evidently issued only to the soldiers who man the observation posts or patrol in twos and threes near the Wall.

On a pleasant day in August, I was one of hundreds of visitors to this spot. Like the others, I bought ice cream from a nearby vendor and draped myself restfully over the barricade before resuming my stroll.

The most rewarding conversations to eavesdrop on turned out to be those involving children. During the hour or so that I spent there, I heard at least five youngsters observe that the birds flying overhead did not mind the Wall. It sounds too trite to be true, but apparently that's the obvious thing to notice. The children didn't mean anything political; they just knew that one is supposed to stay away from the Wall.

A number of children asked their elders about West Berlin, barely visible in the distance. An older couple, grandparents with memories of grimmer times, nervously shushed their curious grandchild. A young mother explained to her son, "That's where the fascists and militarists live," helping the boy to find his bearings by what he had learned in school. Another youngster observed, "Our world looks nicer, doesn't it?" His father nodded glumly, "You think so?"

Fifteen years ago he would not have been so reticent. That's why they built the Wall. □

F.S. Manor

Eurocommunism, the Italian Sausage

The Italian Communists may not be ready to assume power, but they are assiduously working "from the bottom upwards."

Like Risorgimento, Renaissance, and Roman Catholicism, Eurocommunism was born in Italy. It was first developed in 1956 by Palmiro Togliatti, then secretary-general of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), in the context of Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization. But now that Eurocommunism has become the great fashion in Western Europe, Italian Communists are claiming an even longer pedigree for their enlightened views, attributing them to the Party's Founding Father, Antonio Gramsci.

Since Italy is the cradle of this new, rapidly spreading creed, I decided to travel to Rome to discover the philosophers' stone* of Eurocommunism in the *Via delle Botteghe Oscure*—the Street of Obscure Shops (or shady deals, if you will) that is the Italian Communist Party's own Vatican. Despite my reasonable qualifications and my long-time association with Italian politics, the search for this particular philosophers' stone proved as elusive as that of the alchemists of yore. In Italy confusion reigns supreme, and this applies as much to the Italian Communist Party as to any other group.

When I speak of confusion, I refer to the *pays politique*, not to the *pays réel* where, at least from the visitor's point of view, things function considerably better than they did, say, three years ago. Because of a favorable rate of exchange, Italy is one of the few truly inexpensive countries in Western Europe, perhaps the only one. It is also one of the few countries where service—in the old-fashioned, non-demeaning sense—still exists. The trains are clean, punctual, cheap and their food is quite excellent. The museums, which during my last visit were closed because of a lack of supervisory personnel, are again open, providing perpetual delight. The cafés are full, and the little restaurants off the main tourist circuit are crowded with Italians still carefully selecting their menus and gravely consulting the proprietor about his wine. Indeed, Italy is so beautiful, pleasant, and full of charming surprises that a person who does not read the local newspapers and keeps away from the universities and industrial districts will never realize the gravity of the crisis convulsing the country. This, too, is one of Italy's perplexing contradictions.

"If you left Italy in 1953 you'll not recognize our Party," the foreign affairs spokesman of the Italian Communist Party told me. "We've changed."

"Am I speaking to the future foreign minister of Italy?" I inquired courteously. But the Honorable Antonio Rubi spread his hands in mock denial, and with a deprecating laugh dismissed my compliment: "So far, nobody's talking about ministerial posts." *So far.*

There is no doubt that things have changed. The Street of the Obscure Shops has the distinction of housing not only the headquarters of the Italian Communist Party but also that of the Italian Manufacturers' Association. During the unenlightened days that stretched up to three years ago, the two powers would glower at each other across the narrow street. Now I wonder whether they have built an underground passage between the two headquarters, the better to coordinate their remarkably convergent policies.

Three years ago, I had an appointment at the offices of the Manufacturers' Association, but since in Rome an address on the *Via delle Botteghe Oscure* means only one thing, the taxi-driver deposited me outside the Communist Party headquarters. With my briefcase and my Borsalino hat I looked eminently bourgeois, and as soon as I descended from the cab I was surrounded by four or five stocky, muscular men, one of whom stuck out his chin in my direction and spat out: "*Dica*!" In Italian this means "Tell me!" but a better translation would be a challenging: "Well?!" When I explained my quest, he flicked his thumb dismissively in the direction of the rival power and watched me suspiciously as I crossed the road.

The heavies may still be around, but if so they are kept well out of sight. Instead, the lobby is populated with presentable and extremely polite young men flirting with the even more present-

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* *Philosophers' Stone*: A reputed solid substance or preparation supposed by the alchemists to possess the property of changing other metals into gold or silver....Being identified with the ELIXIR, it had also, according to some, the power of prolonging life indefinitely, and of curing all wounds and diseases. (*Oxford English Dictionary*)

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able young women, who flit around, or sit in their offices with legs crossed, putting varnish on their nails. The impression is unmistakable. One feels to have blundered into an important department of the Italian government, the atmosphere being the same typical mixture of nonchalant indolence and industrious paperwork: Files are carried from office to office; an entire suite is marked "post-office"; and as I watched the pretty girls painting their fingernails in loyal Party colors, or chatting on the office telephone with friends, I began to wonder whether the stern Communist Party I once knew has indeed been infected with *la dolce vita*.

It was startlingly different not only from the fortress-like mentality of old but also from the aura of defeat that seemed to pervade the headquarters of the Italian Socialist Party where, on the night before, I had a long discussion with the Honorable Bettino Craxi, the Party's new secretary-general. Mr. Craxi had had a busy day, his party having just launched a new political maneuver—"opened a crisis," as it is called in Italian political jargon—with the explicit aim of bringing the Communists into the government.

Italian Socialists, like those in so many Western countries, are fascinated with Communism. They, too, would like to be the big, tough boys, but somehow lack the essential ruthlessness. But this is not the true explanation of the present tactics of the Italian Socialists. Rather, it lies in the Byzantine intricacies of Italian politics. An Italian acquaintance remarked to me that the Byzantines themselves could never have risen to the heights of intrigue and deviousness which inform Italian politics. Who, even in Byzantium, could have invented the current political term "Parties of no non-confidence" (*partiti di non-sfiducia*) to describe those in the Italian parliament who keep the minority Christian Democratic government in power by abstaining from votes of non-confidence?

To understand Italy one has to understand her history: The Allies liberated the Italians from the Nazis; the French liberated them from the Austrians; the Austrians from the Spanish; the Spanish from the Angevins—for a thousand years it was always somebody else liberating Italy. Moreover, with the exceptions of the Allies in 1945 (and even here the left-wing parties propagate a myth of their own) and the French in 1859, each liberator promptly took the place of the defeated oppressor. A thousand years of alien rule does not make for a loyal or trusting citizenry. Nor can one forget that the present Italian state is only a century old.

Because so many Italians distrust their government they vote Communist. But in these voters' eyes Italian Communism has little in common with any type of socialism. It is consumerism pure and simple. People have voted Communist with the expectation that the Party would make it possible for them to consume more and for their political opponents (who may include a boss, a neighbor, or a mother-in-law) to consume less. The Communists have fostered this delusion; hence the car on every doorstep; hence the unwonted consumption of meat (up to a few years ago Italians were not big meat eaters). I recall how a few years ago I stood on St. Mark's Square in Venice amazed at the monstrous increase in the pigeon population. "In the bad old days," a Venetian friend explained, "the Venetians would come to the square every night and snare a few pigeons for the pot. Now they go to the supermarket and buy a frozen chicken, or a steak."

Because agriculture has been badly neglected, the large quantities of meat the Italians now consume have to be imported from abroad; and so does the gasoline for all those cars that disfigure the lovely piazzas of Italian cities. And now, with the mounting balance-of-payments deficit, those frozen chickens of consumerism have come home to roost on the very roof of the palace in the Street of Obscure Shops. The Communists are well aware that it will require a strong dose of austerity to restore some order to Italy's economy. But how is the Party to sell austerity to voters who for years were lured with visions of more and more?

This unenviable task has been left to the Socialist comrades, who in their draft program, on which an all-party consensus is to be based, propose strict rationing of meat, of natural gas for heating, and of gasoline. Gasoline has already been rationed by price—it costs $3.50 a gallon—and traffic in Rome has dropped by 20 percent, if one is to believe official statistics rather than one's own eyes. The Socialists are determined to push their program through even at the cost of a new election. The Communists, however, do not seem to share this enthusiasm. They do not want a premature election, which they could lose. They know they will have great trouble convincing the unions of the need for belt-tightening. The bosses of the big unions are largely Party members and will loyally follow Party orders. But it will be a different matter on the shop-floor.

Italy's present crisis has been described as economic, social, and moral. The economic crisis is reflected in the balance-of-payments deficit, and in the budgetary deficit caused largely by the indexation of wages and low productivity. The social crisis has affected public services: The mails are slow and unreliable; the hospitals are deeply in debt because the mutual health insurance corporations—including those run by the labor unions—have not been paying their bills. The Communists allege that the mutuals made unwise investments and lost money that should have gone to the hospitals. Be that as it may, pharmaceutical companies, and even caterers supplying food for patients, now deal with hospitals solely on a cash-on-delivery basis. Welfare services are overburdened by substantial unemployment among the young and women. There are a million students at the Italian universities, far more than the country can absorb. It is, therefore, no wonder that the young unemployed, together with the unemployable (and often unteachable) students, provide willing recruits for the criminal and terrorist gangs that plague Italy.

Italy has a serious law-and-order problem, the third—moral—component of the crisis. However, this should not be exaggerated. It is nowhere as bad as in New York, or Detroit, or Belfast for that matter. While I was having my interviews, my wife walked alone all across Rome, something she would not have been able to do in, say, Washington. In the evening we strolled round the *Piazza del Popolo*, up to the Pincio public gardens, and through the narrow streets to *Via Veneto* to enjoy a coffee or an ice cream and watch the world go by, pleasures no longer available in most North American cities.

Nonetheless, political terrorism, often loosely linked with the indigenous *Cose Nostre*, does pose a threat, and recently left-wing terrorists have been able to challenge the rule of law and defy the power of the state. In May, a number of terrorists, charged with multiple murders, kidnappings, and bank hold-ups, were to be tried by the Turin Assizes. On the day set for the trial a mysterious epidemic broke out among the jurymen summoned for duty. Every one of them appeared with a medical certificate attesting that he was unfit for jury duty. So he was. The dread disease, as a Venice newspaper remarked, was stark fear. (On the following day the homes of two staff writers of this newspaper were fire-bombed.) The trial had to be postponed, having already claimed one victim: The president of the Turin bar association had been assassinated a few days before the trial was due to begin, and the terrorists claimed "credit" for his murder.

A day after Italian justice had proved unable to function, five Mafia kidnappers and murderers, awaiting trial, walked out of a Milan prison brandishing machine-pistols that had been smuggled in, entered cars waiting for them outside the prison gates, and disappeared into the blue.

Hospitals do not function; courts do not function; prisons serve as headquarters for both the Mafia and political terrorists; the economy is going downhill; unemployment is growing. It is no wonder that the Communists are reluctant to assume power. At present they are assiduously cultivating their image. They want to become *salonfähig* and enter Western society, and for this they need a respectable chaperon to introduce them to the British, the Germans, and, above all, the Americans. Only the Christian Democratic Party can perform this service, and the Communists will not become involved in any joint government venture unless the Christian Democrats first offer them a helping hand. On the other hand, the badly beaten Socialists—who for more than ten

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years formed the Center-Left coalition with the Christian Democrats—refuse to join the government unless the Communists provide them with a fig-leaf. The Christian Democrats, having been elected on an anti-Communist platform, are ready to consult the Communists and involve them in drafting legislation, but will not have them in the government. They would be willing to renew their old coalition with the Socialists, but the Socialists will not join without the Communists. It is a fascinating game, and the outcome is anybody's guess.

I asked Mr. Rubi what will happen if the French Popular Front wins next year's election. Mr. Rubi admitted—and this is yet another paradox of Italian politics—that for the Communists such a victory would present a problem. If a Communist-Socialist coalition assumes power in France, "our Socialist comrades will clamor for a similar government to assume power in Italy." (The left-wing parties could hammer together a majority in the Italian parliament.) This, the Communists claim, would be unfortunate. The Communist Party favors the "historical compromise," not an Italian version of the Popular Front. Haunted by the spectre of Allende, the Italian Communists argue that they cannot rule against the will of half the people. They cannot forget the power of the Church—a "stabilizing power," as Mr. Rubi described it—or overlook the fact that a large number of Communist voters attend Mass each Sunday. Nor, on the other hand, can the Vatican abandon the masses of Communist voters, who comprise a majority of the faithful, or forget about the Catholics of Eastern Europe. As far as the Church is concerned, the days of strident anti-Communism are over.

The Church is pragmatic, the Communists have become pragmatic. The Socialists alone seem to have done with pragmatism. They want action now, action that would settle once and for all their love-hate relationship with the Communists. The Socialists resent their defeat and blame it on the "monopoly of opposition" the Communists have enjoyed for three decades. They also attribute their rival's success to the disintegration of the Italian middle class, 34 percent of which votes Communist. One of the most important reasons for the Communist Party's strength in Italy is that it has become the party of the middle class.

The Italian Communists may not be ready to assume power, but they are assiduously working "from the bottom upwards." The media are completely in their hands—no anti-Communist article can be published because the printers won't print it, and no anti-Communist feature can be broadcast because the technicians will not allow it. And in a show of union solidarity, the Italian equivalent of the Newspaper Guild will always side with the printers or technicians. An independent Italian television station—democratic, anti-totalitarian, and thus anti-Communist—was set up in Monte Carlo to provide the Italian viewing public with a choice. It was silenced through intimidation of the relay stations; and the new Socialist program for joint action specifically demands measures against such "pseudo-foreign" broadcasts.

A Christian Democratic professor told me that although the Communists are not yet in power, "our intellectuals have already jumped on their bandwagon." He said that, "under Fascism, people were forced to join the Fascist Party to keep their jobs, their livelihood. Those who actively opposed Fascism ended up in prison. Now there is no such compulsion, yet the educated classes are rushing to take out their Party cards. When the Communists are in power, even the paving stones in Rome will be Communist." Yet it was the same professor who remarked that for 30 years young generations of Italian Communists have been accustomed to democracy and freedom of expression. It may now be difficult to silence them and impose "democratic centralism." Herein lies the schizophrenia that affects the Italian Communists. In France, Georges Marchais is a recent convert from Stalinism who hates America and uses his new "democratic" image to reach power. In Italy, there is no doubt about the Communist Party's desire to be independent and, strangely enough, to become respectable.

During my interview at the Communist Party headquarters, Mr. Rubi wondered why none of its representatives has been invited to visit Canada. I pointed to the tiny number of Canadian Communists, who probably do not have the funds to indulge in such luxuries, but Mr. Rubi dismissed this as irrelevant. The Italian Communists are not interested in any such narrow Party functions. Prominent Party members have been invited to the United States by various official and influential bodies that have no links with the American Communist Party. If Italian Communists receive such flattering invitations from the United States, why not from Canada? This desire for recognition, for re-insurance against a new Soviet *Praguerie* is probably quite genuine. The long pedigree of Italian Communist independence is not entirely spurious, as I can testify from my own experience of 25 years ago. The Party has always had its independent spirits who, like the rabbi in *Fiddler on the Roof*, wanted the Marxist deity to keep the Soviet Tsar, but to keep him at a safe distance.

At present, the Italian Communist Party is a coalition of two movements: the Eurocommunists, who for the moment have the upper hand, and the dour Muscovite faction that for the time being is staying out of sight and keeping its own counsel. How wide the divisions between the two factions are is difficult to estimate. Probably, the differences are mainly tactical rather than ideological: Despite all their professions of change, development, and adaptation to democracy, the Italian Eurocommunists have retained basic Marxist-Leninist beliefs and a desire to remain members in good standing with the world Communist movement.

The Communist Party may indeed parade as the protector of the small businessman and the patriotic investor, even as the guardian of the sanctity of private property. But its basic aim is to "restructure" the free-enterprise system—*superare*, to overcome it, was the term used by Mr. Rubi. I have, therefore, grave doubts whether the conversion to democracy of these present-day Marranos is more than skin-deep. Let me quote a few instances to substantiate these doubts. A few days before my visit to the Street of Obscure Shops, Professor Lombardo Radice, one of those intellectuals (he is a mathematician) who adds luster to Italian Communism, had his now famous interview with Radio Free Europe (the full text of which was published in the May 1977 issue of *Encounter*). Professor Radice was asked whether in a grave international crisis a Communist-ruled Italy would remain loyal to NATO. His reply was: "We would choose the Soviet side, of course." Later, he slightly modified the answer, but the cat was out of the bag. I asked Mr. Rubi about the interview; he was very uncomfortable about it, but his dialectics were superb. Originally, Radio Free Europe had an anti-Soviet function although, Mr. Rubi quickly added (in the spirit of Helsinki), it now does provide some factual information. Nevertheless, he continued, its function has become known as anti-Soviet, and no member of the Italian Communist Party could be expected to engage in an anti-Soviet propaganda broadcast over an anti-Soviet radio station. It was a *tour de force*, but it was also very disconcerting.

The Italian Communist Party describes itself as a "law-and-order party," yet it refuses to assist the minority government in tackling the growing problem of political terrorism, even though some of the left-wing terror is directed against the Communists. Enrico Berlinguer, the Party chief, is on the assassination list of the Maoist guerrillas; and when veteran Communist labor leader Luciano Lama attempted to address a left-wing students' meeting on the Rome University campus last spring, he had to flee for his life, chased by the Maoist mob.

The Communists have refused to consent to grant the Italian police certain vital, emergency powers, including that of wiretapping. Obviously, as long as the police are not under Communist control they will remain powerless. When, in May, the minority Christian Democratic government presented to the Italian parliament a draft bill that would tighten the incredibly lax regime in Italy's prisons—prisoners come and go, arms are brought in, every prisoner seems entitled to make private telephone calls—the left-wing parties amended it out of all recognition. As it emerged from committee, the bill would give prisoners even more freedom than they now enjoy. →

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I cannot share the conviction of the Italian Socialists, as expressed by Mr. Craxi, that the nature of Communism is changing. For instance, Professor Radice, in the interview broadcast over Radio Free Europe, could not envisage anybody voting against the Communists once they had assumed power in Italy and introduced a "superior civilization." The utopian ideology remains, and the vision of a typical Communist *apparatchik* —such as Professor Radice—of "socialism within democracy and freedom" remains sketchy, basically informed with unchanged Marxism-Leninism. It is a vision that is not compatible with the Western concept of human liberty.

Postscript: The son of my Italian friends, who had perished in last year's Friuli earthquake, chided me for my pessimism. "Don't be like my father," he said. "For 30 years my father expected a Communist regime to take power in Italy. He continually feared the worst, a complete ruin, nationally and personally. What he did not foresee was that the ruin would not come from Communism, but from an earthquake."

I offer it as a suitable consolation. □

Richard Hanser

The Holy Writ Kit

If you like to read training-manuals, you'll love the Good News Bible.

"How forcible are right words!" as Job was saying a few thousand years ago, and to this day most reasonable men would agree that it is a true saying well put. The phrasing of it in English was chosen by the translators of the King James Bible, the Authorized Version, and the words themselves, placed in that order, seem both right and forcible.

But the makers of the Revised Standard Version, for reasons of their own, did not think that Job had chosen just those words. According to the RSV people, what he said was: "How Forceful are honest words!" To many this did not seem like much of an improvement, clarifying no doctrinal point and improving the sentiment in no discernible way. The retention of the exclamation point, however, seemed reasonable. Something more or less emphatic was still being said.

Now, with sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, comes still another grope at what old Job was really saying back there in the land of Uz amid the sore afflictions the Lord was laying on him. Something called the Good News Bible, the most recent overhaul of the traditional text, opts for: "Honest words are convincing...." Here the exclamation point has disappeared, and rightly. Nothing is left to exclaim over in this limp reduction of what began as a vigorous and perceptive remark.

These three versions of v. 25, Chapter VI, of the Book of Job can stand as a handy paradigm, a brief but indicative synopsis, of the untiring efforts of a succession of pious drudges over the years to make Holy Writ sound like something intended for use in a remedial reading class.

As a cultural event of our times, the Good News Bible has not attracted nearly the attention it so clearly deserves. A book had been loosed on the public whose statistics make the most ardent brags of lay publishers look pathetic. A current advertisement in the book trade shouts: *150,000 Copies In Print!* Laughable. The publishers of the Good News Bible anticipate a sale of 10,000,000 copies during the first year alone. It seems a modest forecast. When the New Testament was published separately in this translation in 1966, under the title of *Good News for Modern Man*, it promptly knocked off Dr. Spock as the all-time best seller. When last heard from it had passed the 50,000,000 mark—a record without parallel in American publishing history.

The aim of the new translation is to put the Bible into "the natural English of everyday adult conversation" in order to reach those unable to cope with the bafflements and pitfalls of previous translations. A "team" of seven translators was organized under the Rev. Dr. Robert Galveston Bratcher, a Th.D. of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. His background, we are told, includes a tour of duty as "professor of New Testament, South Brazil Theological Seminary." Other members of the team rejoice in similar scholarly distinctions—"Assistant Professor, Taejon Presbyterian College, Korea"; "...attended Institute for Bible Translators in Thailand," and the like. Six of the seven translators have been overseas missionaries. The American Bible Society supervised everything.

For the Authorized Version a different procedure was followed. The realm of King James was combed for scholars "skilful in the tongues" at a time when the English language was reaching new, and still unsurpassed, heights of richness, variety, musicality, and beauty. The translators were steeped in a language inherited from Chaucer and Wycliffe, and were contemporaries of Shakespeare himself. Among their number was Lancelot Andrewes, Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Winchester, who, on no less an authority than T.S. Eliot, ranks as one of the great masters of English prose.

What this group of scholars produced was a literary miracle. For more than three and a half centuries its language and its images have penetrated more deeply into the general culture of the English-speaking world, and been more dearly treasured, than anything else ever put on paper. The infidel H.L. Mencken spoke for most literate men when he called it "probably the most beautiful piece of writing in any language...stupendous."

It can be said with confidence that no similar remark will ever be made about the Good News Bible. Its very title strikes a hucksterring note. (Were the earlier Bibles bad news?) Its own sponsors seem intent on clothing it in the drabbest and least fetching raiments possible. It is, say the official announcements, "a common-language, dynamic-equivalent translation." Like many another advertising catch-phrase, "dynamic-equivalent" has a contrived and flatulent sound and no precise meaning. But if "dynamic-equivalent" is supposed to mean vigorous and forceful, a few random comparisons of the style and phrasing of the Authorized Version with those of the Good News Bible will quickly establish which of the two has more vigor and force. Let us dip

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Richard Hanser, of Mamaroneck, New York, wrote the NBC television specials The Coming of Christ, He is Risen, *and* The Law and the Prophets, *and is the author of* Jesus: "What Manner of Man is This?" (*Simon & Schuster*).

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alternately into the Old Testament and the New for examples.

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever," says the Preacher of Ecclesiastes in the AV. In the GNB the Preacher becomes a Philosopher, and what he now says is: "Generations come and generations go, but the world stays just the same." Where the Preacher (I/18) used to say, *"For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow"* the Philosopher now says: "The wiser you are, the more worries you have; the more you know the more it hurts."

"The voice of the one crying in the wilderness" in Matthew is coverted into: "Someone is shouting in the desert." And what the voice is crying is no longer *"Prepare ye the way..."* but: "Get the road ready...."

As might be expected, the GNB has a dreadful time with the lush and lovely poetry of the Song of Songs, and what the reader gets here is not so much dynamic equivalents as Tin Pan Alley substitutions. For *"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter"* the GNB missionaries come up with: "What a magnificent girl you are!" And one hesitates to reveal what they have done with : *"Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love."* What they have done is this: "Restore my strength with raisins and refresh me with apples! I am weak from passion."

No opportunity to flatten out, bleach, or reduce is overlooked, and this becomes most glaring in those long-loved passages to which believers over the centuries have looked for comfort, assurance, or joy in the supreme moments of life. The opening line of the Twenty-Third Psalm is, gratefully, retained intact. But the lovely cadence of the second line—*"I shall not want"*—becomes a flat and platitudinous: "I have everything I need." The hauntingly somber *"valley of the shadow of death"* becomes a piddling "deepest darkness."

A similar touch has been accorded the Christmas story. Here *"the wise men from the east"* become "some men who studied the stars." The Christ child is "wrapped in cloths," whatever a cloth may be, and *"the heavenly host"* is now "a great army of heaven's angels." But perhaps the climax and crown of the GNB's dynamic equivalence comes in Luke II/10 where the Authorized Version has the glorious words: *"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy...!"* This, incredibly, becomes: "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you...."

The chatty, small-talk tone is sometimes carried to lengths that make the reader snort, snicker, or gag, according to temperament. Where, in Isaiah IV/1, it is said that *"seven women shall take hold of one man,"* the GNB has the women "grab hold" of him. Isaiah, greatest of the Major Prophets, here uses language like: "Listen, now...," "Well, then...," and "Before the boy is old enough to say 'Mama' and 'Daddy'...."

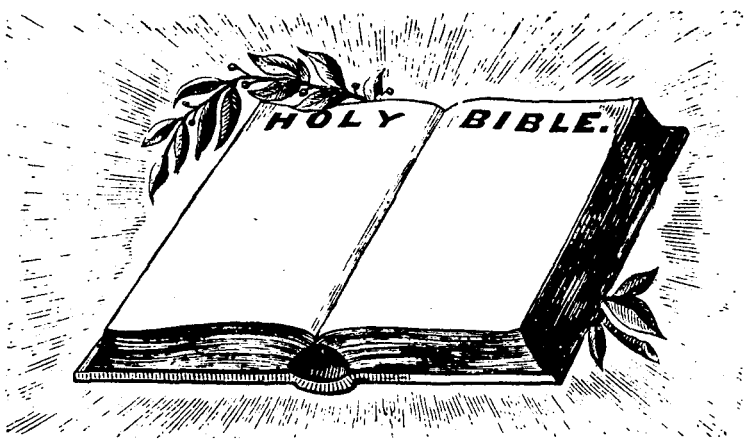
The sayings and preaching of Jesus are also rendered, by this process of reverse alchemy, into greeting-card prose. "Listen!" He says, and "Believe me...." In His Beatitudes the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, are no longer "blessed." Now they are "happy" instead. Urging His followers not to worry about food and drink, He says: "After all, isn't life worth more than food?... And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow...." He puts it to them straight: "Can any of you live a little bit longer by worrying about it?"

It is the brag of the sponsors that their translation is "a Bible as readable as the daily newspaper." This is a comment that the Bible Society would do better to suppress than to circulate. While it is true that Jesus spoke to the common people in the everyday language of His time and place, it is folly to imagine that the equivalent effect can be achieved merely by transferring His words into the everyday language of our time and place. If we know anything about Him for sure it is that He originally spoke with a mysterious force, a power and beauty that still reverberate around the world. His listeners *"wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." "Great multitudes of people...from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon"* came to hear Him speak, *"and they were astonished at His doctrine; for His word was with power."* Surely, no such effect could have been produced by the flat-footed phrases, the Kiwanis Club prose, of the Good News Bible.

The Authorized Version, on the other hand, does suggest to us something of the wonder and astonishment that the words of Jesus caused when they were first spoken, and this is one of its incomparable merits. It is, indeed, obscure in parts and archaic throughout. But these are not insurmountable obstacles, if they are obstacles. It is possible to clarify without vulgarizing, and to simplify without draining away all the poetry and mystery without which religion becomes merely rigmarole. The argument, used repeatedly by the American Bible Society, that many people are too dull and ignorant to absorb any language more elevated than GNB's is both patronizing and specious. For centuries the great mass of Christians of all conditions and denominations have been able to grasp the Bible's message, and respond to it, without first having it reduced to the level of a training manual.

The Authorized Version has survived many previous attempts to water it down, flatten it out, and dull it up, and it will certainly outlast this one too. Still, a kind of Gresham's Law operates here as everywhere else. What is shoddy and inferior is always a threat to the excellence it competes with. No religion could possibly have spread across the earth, and lasted 2,000 years, if the best it had to offer at its most exalted moment was a line like: "I am here with good news for you." And a religion that imagines it can survive on that kind of fare is courting extinction.

John Tyndale was burned at the stake in 1536 for his translation of the Bible, but no such danger hangs over the modern translator no matter how deplorable his efforts. So the tinkering, doctoring, retouching, and general horsing around with the sacred texts will no doubt continue. Succeeding generations of pious drudges will keep doing it until they get it right. It will not dawn on them that it has already been gotten right, and that they are wasting their time. □



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Marc F. Plattner

The New, New Politics

The Carter-Brown formula blends liberalism and conservatism with an anti-politician style, and signals the emergence of a new political type.

In the January 1976 issue of *The Alternative*, I contended that Kevin Phillips' and William Rusher's prognoses of the emergence of a new conservative majority were misguided because these authors continued to view the ideological divisions among the American people from the perspective of the late 1960s. The polarization that characterized that period was a thing of the past, I argued, and formerly clear-cut ideological lines were becoming increasingly blurred. The New Left had all but disappeared as an independent political force, and yet many of the attitudes that it fostered had gained a considerable hold over public opinion. Believing that this development would not clearly benefit either the Right or the Left, I concluded with the prediction that "we will probably be seeing more political figures like California's Governor Jerry Brown who combine liberal and conservative impulses in strange new ways."

When these words were first written in the fall of 1975, Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign had not yet impinged upon the public consciousness, and it appeared that the new type of political figure that I saw as the wave of the future was unlikely to emerge at the presidential level before 1980. No doubt this was Jerry Brown's calculation as well, as the young California governor, with a long political career ahead of him, initially seemed prepared to sit out the 1976 presidential race. But then came the astonishing success of the Carter primary campaign—a success based in large measure on transcending traditional definitions of liberalism and conservatism and appealing to much the same wide spectrum of voters as Brown did. It is surely humanly and politically understandable that Governor Brown, witnessing something very like his own political formula propelling Carter to glory, and watching the erosion of his own position as the herald of a new brand of politics, felt compelled to make a late entry into the primaries in a futile attempt to stem the Carter tide.

I do not mean to suggest that Jimmy Carter's political vision, strategy, and style are similar to Jerry Brown's in all essential respects. A number of observers have commented on the contrast between Brown's ascetic Jesuitism and Carter's family-oriented Baptist fundamentalism. Carter is almost a generation older than Brown. His persona as a peanut farmer whose values are rooted in his small-town, south Georgia upbringing could hardly be more at odds with Brown's comparatively rootless, urban California background. Carter's political appeal proved strongest in his native South and weakest in the West. Brown was strongest in the West, and one suspects that he would have made his weakest showing in the South had he campaigned there. Carter's deepest political vision seems, at least in part, to aim at a restoration of America to the harmony and simplicity of a past which has somehow been lost. It would be difficult to see in Brown's deepest political vision anything other than a call for a fundamentally new turn in the American way of life.

Yet, despite these differences, there are striking similarities that more than justify regarding Jimmy Carter and Jerry Brown as exemplars of the same political trend. The hallmark of this new trend is its ability to appeal simultaneously to liberal, moderate, and conservative opinion, not merely on the basis of personal style or charisma, but by means of a political strategy that blends seemingly disparate ideological positions. Despite some superficial resemblances, this strategy does not represent a return to the cautious, middle-of-the-road politics of Dwight D. Eisenhower. It is not a politics that compromises ideological differences in the search for a safe middle ground, but one that incorporates some unquestionably liberal and some unquestionably conservative features to form a distinctively new pattern. This is why the politics of Brown and Carter seem so mysterious and unpredictable. It is also what has made it possible for so many liberals to convince themselves that Carter is "really" a liberal, while so many moderates and conservatives are equally convinced that Carter's heart is really with them.

The specific elements in the new political posture adopted by Brown and Carter can be readily enumerated. First, beginning with those borrowed from the liberal side, there is rhetorical sympathy for the plight of the poor, "minority groups" (blacks, Hispanics, etc.), and women. Next, there is support for the consumer and environmental movements. Both these tendencies are given their strongest concrete expression in the appointment of minority-group members, women, and liberal activists to important and highly visible government posts. Finally, there is a moralistic emphasis on the limits to economic growth that, combined with friendliness to consumer groups and environmentalists, imparts a certain anti-business tinge to the new posture.

These liberal elements, however, are balanced by a number of distinctly conservative themes. Foremost among these is fiscal restraint, an old-fashioned regard for balanced budgets and limited government spending. Accompanying this is a new skepticism about "big government" and the ability of massive spending programs to solve social and economic problems. A further corollary to these propositions is a hostility to cumbersome government bureaucracies and a highly vocal concern with improving the efficiency of government. I need hardly add that the combination of fiscal conservatism and opposition to big government means that liberal rhetoric sympathetic to the poor is in no way matched by costly government programs to aid them.

Finally, it is necessary to consider some aspects of the political "style" common to both Brown and Carter. Although they are extremely shrewd political strategists, each has successfully presented himself as an "anti-politician," a man who stands apart from and above the shabby wheeling and dealing of ordinary politicians. The most conspicuous, and apparently the most politically resonant, expression of this new style has been a voluntary renunciation of some of the perquisites and ceremonies of high office—a policy that President Carter seems to have unabashedly copied from Governor Brown. This effort to maintain republican simplicity and democratic informality is complemented by a rigorous devotion to long hours of labor at the public's busi-

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ness and a careful attention to the details of running a complex government. The final touch is a discreet admixture of private spirituality, reflected in Carter's born-again Christianity and Brown's personal blend of Catholicism and Oriental religiosity.

How can the coherence and the wide appeal of this new political stance be explained? I believe that the answer, as suggested in my January 1976 *Alternative* article, lies in the shrewd way in which Brown and Carter have understood and exploited the complex response of middle-America to the New Left politics of the 1960s. The crushing defeat of George McGovern in 1972 confirmed that a candidate who was perceived as an agent of radical social change and as a spokesman for the New Left assault on traditional middle-class values could not win a national election. The lesson that conservative strategists like Phillips and Rusher drew from this fact was that a new right-wing majority could be consolidated by exploiting popular hostility to the New Left. Such a strategy called primarily for taking a hard-line on the "social issue"—i.e., resolutely opposing "permissiveness," minority-group demands, amnesty for Vietnam draft evaders, "welfare chiselers," the liberal media and intellectuals, etc. In this way, Wallace voters and other blue-collar Democrats could be combined with traditional Republicans to form a coalition that would easily triumph over the McGovernite remnant of the Democratic Party.

It is not inconceivable that in slightly altered circumstances—say, a Reagan vs. Udall race—this strategy might have worked in 1976. But it is apparent that the conservative theorists over-estimated the depth of middle-American hostility to the new cultural-political trends of the 1960s. Insofar as these trends seemed to discredit the way of life of middle-class Americans and to threaten their social and economic status, they were regarded as clearly unacceptable. Yet part of the New Left critique of American society—that we had mistreated our minority groups, that we had insufficiently protected our environment and the interests of consumers, that we had not adequately checked the power of "special interests," that our government had grown too bureaucratic and unresponsive, that our policy-makers had not been attentive enough to ethical considerations—struck a responsive chord with many ordinary Americans, and they were willing to accept it once the threatening elements had been muted or eliminated. It is precisely this that Jerry Brown and especially Jimmy Carter have accomplished, by showing that the heritage of 1960s social protest could be accommodated to middle-class respectability in the 1970s.

Not only was Carter able to appeal to conservatives without using Agnewesque rhetoric, he was able to do so while stressing his compassion and concern for the poor and for blacks. He succeeded in reclaiming the moral force of the civil-rights movement and identifying it with his candidacy, and even conceded some measure of moral validity to the anti-war movement. Brown has gone even further in this direction, proudly citing his own support for the civil-rights movement in the early 1960s and for Eugene McCarthy's anti-war candidacy in 1968, and closely allying himself with Cesar Chavez' efforts to organize California farm workers. Both men have filled prominent posts in their administrations with minority-group members and former 1960s activists. As a result, they have gained considerable good will among the upper-middle-class liberals who are so powerful in the media and the universities, and whose support is of no small importance in practical political terms. Yet all this has been accomplished without offending many of the same voters who could not stomach the politics of George McGovern.*

Around the time of the 1972 Democratic primary in Wisconsin, some commentators put forward the theory of "the two Georges," according to which Senator McGovern and Governor Wallace were attracting similar types of "alienated" voters away from "Establishment" candidates like Senators Humphrey and Muskie. As the 1972 general election showed, this theory was clearly overdrawn: The differences between McGovern and Wallace supporters outweighed whatever similarities there might have been, and the great bulk of the Wallace vote subsequently went to President Nixon. Yet there *was* something to the notion that voters on both the Left and the Right shared a certain common dissatisfaction with the traditional Democratic approach, as Jimmy Carter proved by uniting elements of these dissident factions behind his candidacy in 1976.

Why was Carter able to succeed in attracting much of the Wallace vote (and even the endorsement of Wallace himself) where McGovern had so totally failed? Part of the answer, of course, is that Carter is himself a Southerner, but there is much more to it than that. In the first place, Carter was careful to avoid being identified with a full-fledged liberal stance on the social issue. In regard to some of the most controversial questions—amnesty, abortion, busing, etc.—he staked out finely calibrated "half-way" positions that protected him from the ire of the Right. Moreover, his well-publicized born-again Christianity doubtless convinced many social and cultural conservatives that deep down Carter really belonged to their camp. Finally, Carter took great pains to show that his friendliness to minorities and his espousal of various liberal positions should not be interpreted as a challenge to the way of life of ordinary Americans. By proclaiming that he sought for America merely "a government as good as its people," he reassured the citizenry that he did not view them as corrupt, or racist, or in need of moral instruction from the upper-middle-class liberals of the media and the universities. It appears that, with such reassurances, many social conservatives were not averse to backing a candidate who was closely identified with the family and former associates of Martin Luther King. Despite their hostility to the more militant expressions of black resentment in the late 1960s, most Americans still accept—as Jimmy Carter discerned—the moral legitimacy of the civil-rights movement.

But apart from the social issue, there is another set of factors that helps to explain why political figures like Carter and Brown have been so successful in gaining support among "alienated" voters of the sort who might previously have been sympathetic to Wallace. Carter and Brown skillfully adapted the anti-Washington, anti-big-government theme that had occupied so prominent a place in Wallace's rhetoric. To some extent, this theme had also appeared in the arsenal of the New Left, in the form of support for community control and criticism of unresponsive bureaucracies. And New Left attacks on the "Establishment" no doubt contributed to the growing distrust of government that had begun to show up strikingly in opinion poll data *before* Watergate. But such liberal candidates as McGovern were prevented from successfully playing upon the anti-big-government message by their commitment to interventionist schemes like busing and to large-scale social spending programs.

Brown and Carter, by contrast, were burdened by no such commitments, and hence were able to make the anti-Washington theme their own. They did this in part by adopting the anti-politician style referred to earlier but also, substantively, by

* It is true that Carter, like Brown in the 1974 California gubernatorial race, ran a cautious general election campaign which reduced a large early lead in the polls to a narrow victory margin on election day. But it is also true that almost immediately upon taking office, Carter was remarkably successful—just as Brown had been—in extending his popularity, especially among conservatives.

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stressing their fiscal conservatism and their determination to make government work more responsively and less inefficiently. The popularity of this conservative posture showed that the traditional, bread-and-butter programmatic liberalism of the Democratic Party no longer retained its former appeal. This was the fatal flaw in the analysis of anti-McGovern Democrats like Scammon and Wattenberg, who had argued that if the Democratic Party turned its back on the New Left and thus forestalled Republican exploitation of the social issue, it could reconstitute the old, New Deal coalition on the basis of the economic issue. (This was the strategy followed by Senator Jackson in the Presidential primaries, but in 1976 it worked only in the older cities of the Northeast, apparently the last bastion of the ethnic and labor union politics that had for so long dominated the Democratic Party.) It appears, however, that the electorate has lost confidence, not only in the efficacy of the old, New Deal economic remedies, but in the ability of *any* President to achieve a meaningful improvement in the economic situation. Given this skepticism, coupled with resentment at high taxes and continuing inflation, the public mood seems receptive to tight fiscal management, which it hopes will at least prevent further economic deterioration.

The Brown-Carter formula, then, can most succinctly be summed up as follows: 1) compassionate rhetoric, liberal and minority appointments, and support for consumerism and environmentalism to please the liberals and the media; 2) fiscal conservatism and efforts to improve government efficiency to please the conservatives and a general public which is increasingly skeptical about big government; and 3) an anti-politician style to appeal to a public mood of "alienation" and distrust of government common to liberals and conservatives alike.

It remains to be seen whether this formula, which so clearly fits the temper of the present moment, will stand the test of time. Unlike Brown, who prudently introduced a relatively small amount of new legislation upon assuming the California governorship, Carter has begun his presidency with a flurry of new policy initiatives. And the nature of many of those initiatives does not inspire confidence that Carter's policies will be anywhere near as successful as his rhetoric has been. So it is surely possible that the failure of those policies might wind up discrediting the entire Brown-Carter approach. Nonetheless, my own guess is that Brown and Carter have discerned and helped to promote a political trend that is likely to have a lasting impact. In fact, it may well be that in retrospect Carter's 1976 victory will come to be viewed as one of the watershed elections in American history. □

Tom Bethell

Capitol Ideas

Doc Carter arrived in Washington and was instantly Naderized.

Readers will be pleased to hear that not much is happening in Washington these days. Nary a crisis in sight. This is bad news to those beneficiaries (who are also the devisers) of programs aimed at alleviating the nation's quotient of "injustice," but for the rest of us no news from Washington must be counted as good news. Admittedly, Tom Wicker still discerns a comforting glimpse of wickedness in our midst, and every week he will busily fan with his quill the cooling embers of our inequity and iniquity. We have just experienced, he writes, "the kind of Fourth that was commonplace, even predictable, before the long successive traumas of Vietnam and Watergate brought America a decade of self-doubt, self-criticism, self-loathing on the one hand, and responding denials, anger and chauvinism on the other."

Oh, worrisome Fourth! Does it auger a time when we will have no excuse to go on loathing ourselves?—a deprivation that would surely leave Mr. Wicker with a good deal of time on his hands. Happily, no. "All that may still be close to the surface," Wicker adds, "since traumas go on affecting people."

Why are we all supposed to be so traumatized? I have long entertained the theory that American liberals of the "self-loathing" variety can be satisfactorily understood only through resort to the argument *ad hominem*. For example, I believe that in many cases such people sampled the new liberation, acquired new wives and new lifestyles, did their own thing, embraced the new "morality," and generally acquiesced to whatever current folly came their way; then found that this did *not*, as advertised, land them in personal utopia—far from it. Theirs was a secret horror show. Resentful at having been so easily duped, they now presume to denounce the whole system as being rotten to the core, and impute their *personal* traumas to an entire nation, which is instructed to mend its ways or soon come to a calamitous end.

I suspect that such an analysis might well apply to Mr. Wicker of the *Times*, and probably a good many other of our contemporary gloomy liberals. It pleases them to construe their own warped psyches as a disease rampaging across the body politic.

Another report I have before me asserts that the 95th Congress, which was "supposed to be a liberal, Democratic" one, has turned out to be "surprisingly conservative." Leon Shull of the Americans for Democratic Action (a group that caters to "special-interests") is said to be "considerably distressed." What is the cause of this unexpected conservatism? Listen to Mary Russell, a writer who is employed to interpret the news for the benefit of the *Washington Post*'s readership: "Some say the House, subject to election every two years, is simply a barometer of the public mood and the House is responding to a malaise, an uneasiness, a distemper in the country."

Who are these "some" who say this? They are nowhere identified in Mary Russell's article, nor are there any unattributed quotations. But you get the idea, I am sure, even if it is only Mary Russell making it: A conservative country is one affected by distemper.

A convenient diagnosis! This conservative country has apparently been manifesting its symptoms by repudiating government programs and beneficence, and for those who administer such programs, or undertake public relations work on behalf of them in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, this is indeed an ill-humor, a testiness, a disorder, or disturbance (cf. "distemper").

Shame on you, out there in Indiana! Did you know that you have

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distemper because (and these are the points itemized in Mary Russell's article):

You don't want to fund busing programs.

You don't want the FDA to ban saccharin.

You don't want to give money through international lending institutions to Cuba, Uganda, Cambodia, Vietnam.

You don't want to fund public housing or legal services for homosexuals.

You don't want to pay for the operation to eliminate that swelling in the stomach that is so often the unfortunate by-product of an evening of sexual pleasure.

Oh, you dirty, distemper-ridden dogs!

In these areas, common sense, prudence, and ordinary decency may yet prevail, but there is one realm where Washington has the nation conveniently snagged by the trouser leg and will not be prevailed upon to let go, unless I am much mistaken. Here, Washington's great ally has turned out to be that grinning, tousle-headed idiot of a President who ran so successfully *against* Washington, but found, when he arrived, that the prospect from his mansion beside the Potomac was a pleasant one.

I am referring, of course, to the "energy crisis," in which Carter the Quack has cunningly discerned an opportunity to play at being doctor, ministering to the Distemper of the Pipple.

By way of background, the "energy crisis" began to manifest itself some years ago as the side effect of a blockage, or crimp, or obstruction that had been inserted, in a well-meaning way, into the economic arteries of the nation. This blockage, taking the form of price controls, held the price of oil and natural gas artificially below the market level for the benefit of "consumers." This had the effect of encouraging demand and discouraging supply. Shortages resulted. There is our energy crisis.

You would think it would be easy for government, having inserted this blockage, and having had plenty of opportunity to observe its unfortunate outcome, simply to remove it. But no. It is not simple. Why not? Because—and here, I fear, the cynic in me gets the upper hand—to do that would be to remove one more "crisis" from our midst, and thus leave our doctors in Washington with very little to do. Carter the Quack has appreciated this point, having arrived from Plains with a large black satchel of nostrums and patent medicines for our benefit, and he does not intend to be thwarted in his plan to administer them as frequently as possible. Don't forget that Carter sees himself as an "active-positive" President, which in itself should have been enough to warn us off him. *Caveat* Iowans!

In any event, if the Quack is to work his physick upon us, clearly his most important task is to see that the price controls on oil and gas are *not* removed. If this happened, he would very swiftly be confronted by a patient with no more symptoms, and such patients have a way of telling the doctor to snap his black bag shut and go on home. That would reduce Carter to a merely "passive" President.

Thus, when the threat of decontrol came, Carter saw it for what it was. He responded swiftly and with maximum annoyance. "The people of this country will be the ones to suffer if our hopes for an energy plan are thwarted," he quacked. "They will be the ones who will pay for yesterday's special-interest victories."

Note the childishness and petulance of the rhetoric—as though "special-interests" did not represent people. Here we see the alarming extent to which Carter has fallen under the influence of those Washington rogues and knaves whose pleasure it is to carve out a comfortable existence for themselves by drumming up opposition to the productive sector of the economy on the false premise that this sector is not peopled by people. Carter came to Washington and was instantly Naderized.

The "special-interests" referred to were: the oil companies, the automobile companies, the United Auto Workers. According to a recent television advertisement, 14 million people have stock in oil companies. I don't know how many additional millions of people were represented in the lobbying against Carter's program, but the number must have been considerable. Incidentally, the program is plainly tailor-made to create a huge new bureaucracy in Washington, a bureaucracy which is already well on the way to being funded; its budget is $10.5 billion so far—more than the profits of the seven major oil companies. Its 18,000 workers (so far) will meddle about with the new remedies from the Quack's black bag. Rationing? Entitlements? Credits? Taxes? Anything but remove that original obstruction.

Stripped down to its essentials, Carter's energy program consists of a plan to create the funds for a large number of government jobs by making the government a compulsory partner in the production and distribution of energy. Under both the decontrol plan and Carter's plan, the price of energy would go up. In the former plan the money would be distributed to stockholders, under Carter's the money will go to pay additional government employees. Most of these new government jobs will be in Washington; thus his plan is a devious way of diverting a considerable amount of extra cash to the Washington area.

Joe Kraft, the columnist (who lives here), is thrilled; Washington real-estate agents are thrilled; *le tout* Washington is thrilled.

I suppose that my message here is that it is simply impossible to exaggerate the cynicism with which the programs devised by do-gooders deserve to be regarded. The best thing, I think, is simply to assume that such people have a personal stake in their cause that they wisely keep concealed. Carter would be our Super-doctor and so he *likes* a crisis; make no mistake about it. Not for anything in the world would he want such a crisis to go away before he has had a chance to tinker and meddle with it.

Watch out, Indianians, Iowans, Idahoans, for tinkerers, med-

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dlers, planners, and problem-solvers of all sorts, for they are also the crisis-mongers, just like those doctors forever urging you to get a check-up. These people should be watched, kept in sight, suspected of the worst motives. That Washington editor so enthusiastic about the expansion of government programs—is he speculating in D.C. real estate, by any chance?

Liberals must be made to see, if they do not already, that to have good intentions in this world is not enough; nor do such intentions serve to distinguish liberals from others, such as the advocates of "special-interests" and corporate interests, or distemper-ridden conservatives. The best way to drive this point home might be, as I have suggested, to presume the existence of a self-interested motive behind all such crisis-mongering and postulating of injustice. In most cases, of course, such cynicism will prove to be well justified. In cases where it is not, it will nevertheless serve the salutary function of warning liberals that they tend automatically to be viewed as a menace to the community, and that the untoward outcome of any of their pet projects will no longer be indulgently waved aside as a miscalculated good intention. In a word, it is time for conservatives to take the offensive. □

John Nollson

Lady of the Flowers: A Critical Study

Winning the Pulitzer Prize for literary studies is no easy task. Consider the following complex history of my recent emergence as prominent literary critic. It begins with the fact that my great aunt was the well-known poet, Anais Nollson.

The thing I most remember about my great aunt, Anais, was that I could never remember whether there was a what's-it with two dots over the *i* in her name. "You use the diaeresis only if you think I'm like the *i* in naïve," she would chuckle, "otherwise, just remember to put the emphasis on the penult."

Since I could have been no more than seven when she told me this, I could do nothing but giggle. I had once heard my parents discuss the fact that great aunt Anais was far in advance of her time on sexual subjects. In those days, one had to assume that any mention of the penult contravened the unwritten laws of polite society.

Great aunt Anais was not a Nollson by birth, yet she never used her maiden name. She entered the family by marrying Linnaeus Nollson, my grandfather's brother, that is, my great uncle. In retrospect, it is clear that great uncle Linnaeus was proof of the hypothesis developed at Duke University—that one's name has great influence on the course of one's life. Having been named after the great botanist who discovered the curious fact that all plants, without exception, have two Latin names, great uncle Linnaeus was himself a botanist. He was also a florist. As such, he was one of the lesser-known, but most important, figures of the Lost Generation.

From his small shop at number 24 on the Rue Saint Jacques, not far from the University of Paris, in the Quartier Latin, on the Rive Gauche, Linnaeus Nollson delivered his carefully-cultivated flowers to everyone who was anyone in the Parisian cultural community of the 1920s. Yet, so far as I know, I am the first serious literary historian to make use of the Linnaeus Nollson Papers. I now know, for example, who sent those two dozen petunias to Alice B. Toklas on April 14, 1924. I discuss the significance of this in my article in the next issue of *PMLA*.

Great uncle Linnaeus remained a Platonist to the end of his days. This explains why he and Anais named their first son Timaeus, after the fellow in the Platonic dialogue. Uncle Timaeus Nollson, carrying on a family tradition, was also much influenced by his name. He became a classicist and read all the Platonic dialgoues in the original Greek. Predictably, he became a homosexual.

Even though great uncle Linnaeus had delivered flowers to Alice B. Toklas, and knew a thing or two about what went on in her house, he still believed in drawing the line somewhere. Accordingly, he persuaded Timaeus to abandon the study of Plato. Timaeus agreed, and took up the canon law; predictably, he became celibate. Great uncle Linnaeus considered this something of an improvement, but it fell to great aunt Anais to set Timaeus straight. To this day, he insists that his conversation about the birds and the bees with great aunt Anais changed his life. Uncle Timaeus became quite a mover—even a bit notorious. How many times did he tell me—though always omitting the details: "John, your great aunt Anais was one helluva gal!"

I've always been intrigued by this branch of my family. My own father, a respected and prosperous orthodontist, seldom spoke about them. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when just this past summer I stumbled upon the Linnaeus Nollson Papers behind an old cabinet in the herbarium of the National Botanical Garden!

I will make you wait for my new book to find out everything I discovered there. For now, I will whet your appetite and share with you one profound insight into the creative process—an important episode which would have remained forever unknown had I not made my fortuitous find.

The well-known poem by e e cummings —or is it w h auden, or is it Ogden Nash?— has long puzzled literary historians. It is the one that reads:

> O yais,
> 'Tis nais,
> On a dais,
> With Thais.

Clearly, this is a curious verse. The Thais known to history is not necessarily the kind of person with whom one would want to share a dais. Nor does the poem fit the poet's development as we know it. During this symbolist phase of his career, we would surely have expected him to write:

> How nais,
> Is vais,
> Under a dais,
> With Thais.

Indeed, Farrel Mangrate of Toronto, North America's leading authority on quatrains, argues for this alternative reading of the rather cramped handwriting of the original *ms.* Still, we have a right to remain puzzled.

The Linnaeus Nollson Archive sheds a good deal of light on this mystery. In fact, what is surely the original manuscript is preserved between two pages of great uncle Linnaeus' order book for March of 1925. The poem is written on a small card clearly meant to accompany two dozen red roses that the poet had ordered to be sent to none other than my great aunt Anais! The writing on one side of the card is unintelligible, but the other side of the card reads plainly:

> My dearest Anais,
> I know you're not pious,
> But are a woman of spais,
> So let's get under the dais,
> For some vais.

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It'll sure be nais!
—Ezra

The objective correlative of the order book, the Linnaeus Nollson diaries, having been completely deciphered, I can now reproduce in full the entry for March 13, 1925:

As for the pornographic doggerel that I finally had translated, at first I could make neither head nor tail of it till, realizing that it was written in Pali, the ancient language of the Hinayana Buddhist scriptures, I hastened to Professor Lapleur of the Sorbonne, who rendered it quite easily into English. Lapleur's translation, written in his own hand, is on the back of the original Pali text.

Of a sudden, I realized that young Pound, alone among the poets of the city, had sufficient command of Pali to proposition my wife in that obscure and cryptic, albeit holy, language. Accordingly, I confronted him when he came to the shop to pay for the roses he had ordered.

"You're a louse, if you'll carouse, with another man's spouse!" I said heatedly. Pound was taken aback, but remained good humored. He complimented me on my ability to understand Pali. Still, I was very put out. I told Pound that I had half a mind to tell Alice B. Toklas about his interest in Anais. Pound paled visibly; all Paris knew that Alice desired Anais with a passion that only unrequited love could nurture. He begged me for silence since, as he put it: "If Alice ever finds out, she'll beat the hell out of me!"

"Beat the hell out of you?" I sneered. "Why, she'll probably kick your butt half way to the Bois du Boulogne!"

Pound was now ashen. "I guess it's not nais to plot vais, not once, but twais," he moaned.

"You bet your sweet ais," I shot back. "Well," I continued, pressing my psychological advantage, "what do you plan to do about this?"

"I guess I had better cancel the order for the flowers," Pound said sheepishly. "And I guess I had better rewrite the poem too." Pound scribbled hurriedly:

Too bad.
With a tweak of the nose,
I now must dispose,
Of each sensuous rose,
Cause your husband now knows,
That's how it goes.

"No," I said, "she'll just think it's another mash note from Gertrude Stein. But wait! If we transpose but two words in the original Pali text and recast the third line; we shall have produced a perfectly presentable poem. You get to write your erotic verse and I get to save my wife's reputation."

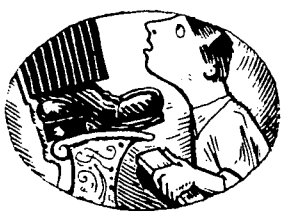
Pound agreed. "Let there be commerce between us," he said. "I'll publish the verse next month, and if anyone ever asks who Thais is, I'll just say it's my Burmese cat."

It was all perfectly reasonable, and I decided that I would no longer pay attention to those backbiters who kept insisting that Ezra was a bit odd.

There you have it, an authentic slice of life, as life was really lived in one of those truly seminal epochs in cultural history. The Linnaeus Nollson Archive, now kept in the rare leaf room of the National Arboretum (where humidity and temperature can be mechanically controlled), contains material enough for at least eight monographs. I may be able to publish as many as eleven. Of course, I have not yet decided whether to publish everything I know, since it's best to keep you guessing.

Eat your heart out, R.W.B. Lewis! □

THE BOOTBLACK STAND



Dr. George Washington Plunkitt, our prize-winning political analyst, has accepted a staff position with the House Ethics Committee, but he has graciously consented to continue advising American statesmen in these times of troubles. Address all correspondence to The Bootblack Stand, c/o The Alternative.

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

The President's decision to call off production of the B-1 bomber has caused considerable consternation with a large number of my colleagues on Capitol Hill who take it as an ominous sign. The President based his decision on the worst possible grounds, saving money. Saving money is simply not a proper function of the federal government. It is bad economics and worse economics. It hearkens to the horse and buggy conceptualization of government so prevalent among the opposition.

Of course, we all want to balance the budget, but one does not balance a budget as complicated as that of the United States government just by refusing to spend public monies. If the President really wants to balance the budget he needs to take a tough-minded approach to the vested interests. He will, in a word, have to adhere to the politics of people, eschewing the politics of non-people. Balancing the budget is a people issue. The American people should not be enslaved by the iron will of some far-off accountant of whose life we know nothing.

Sincerely yours,
Thomas P. O'Neill
Speaker of the House

Dear Mr. O'Neill:

I could not agree with you more. If modern experience has shown us nothing else it is that governments can best be used for spending, not for saving. To me, when the federal government begins to save money it is just another example of big government sticking its nose into another area of the citizens' lives where government just ought not to go. Saving money is the citizens' God-given right. It is the prerogative of the individual, the church, the small family farm. Now if the government moves into this area I just do not see how the little fellow is ever going to compete. —GWP

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

Since I became American Ambassador to the UN an ugly rumor has been circulating which I wish to get out in the open, to wit, the rumor that I am not very intelligent. Well, of course, it's true. I'm not.

Thinking gives me migraines and I get lower back pains when I have to read. I've asked my staff to boil all State Department documents down to three words. The words can be of any length, just so the memo has only three words—and not much punctuation, either.

Look, read anything I've said in the last few years—not very smart, obviously. But what else do you notice? Candor! I am very open. I am almost knee-jerk open: To me

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being open is not just moral; it's a tactic for change. In an attempt to bring change and openness to the American people, I have just signed a lucrative pact to do a series of TV advertisements for a major American muffler manufacturer. The theme will be "America's UN Ambassador needs a Real Good Muffler Just Like You."

Now some of my advisers are telling me that President Carter, a personal friend of mine, is going to be touchy about my contract. This I find appalling. After all I am a perfectly open person, and besides President Carter made a bundle a long time ago. How do I break the news to Mr. Carter?

Sincerely,
Andrew Young

Dear Ambassador Young:

I believe you have already hit on it. Tell him you frankly need the money and that the muffler company really felt you were best qualified to speak on their product. Tell him that you thought the series of ads would bring new prestige to the United Nations, and see if you cannot come up with some sort of special price on mufflers for him. Maybe you could have one installed in Amy's tree house. Look, Andy, he'll understand. He's your friend, remember? —GWP

BOOK REVIEW

Social Limits to Growth
Fred Hirsch / Harvard University Press / $10.00

B. Bruce-Briggs

Fred Hirsch thinks he has a wizard idea to explain why economic growth must stop. He accepts the refutation of the "neo-Malthusian" hypothesis of physical limits to growth or exhausted resources; rather, there are *social* limits, which account for contemporary society's growing disillusionment with growth. The assumption of economic thinkers for the last two centuries that more is better no longer holds; today, more is less. Hirsch goes beyond the traditional notion of physical scarcity so long at the root of economics to a concept of "social scarcity"—when too many people achieve the consumption of a given commodity, its value is debased. For example, as more people go skiing at Aspen, the skiing is not so good. Commodities having the nature of being necessarily limited are labeled "positional goods." They retain economic or status value if only a few have them.

Economic growth creates more "social scarcity" and increasing competition for "positional goods." This is viewed as undesirable and therefore Hirsch speculates on how our thinking might be adjusted to better understand the problem and deal with it. In the course of this exposition he is very severe on conventional economics, both Keynesian and classical. The Keynesian system is seen as predicated on growth and as only a trivial adaptation of a laissez-faire system; it is blackened with the capitalist brush because market economics is Hirsch's principal target. To him, an economy ordered on the principle of achieving self-interest is necessarily counterproductive. A particularly nice metaphor is a crowd watching a parade: If one persons gets up on tip-toe he can see better, so the others must also get up on tip-toe, and nobody has a better view yet everybody has the annoyance of a less comfortable position.

Hirsch's argument is thick, but literate and graceful. Obviously, he has read widely in what used to be called "political economy," particularly the "Chicago School" of neo-classical economists, and he displays an impressive number of references and citations. It is a pity that he did not read less and devote more time to contemplating basic economics and to observing how things really work.

As his example of a *non*-positional good, he offers food. "To a hungry man, the satisfaction derived from a square meal is unaffected by the meals that other people eat or, if he is hungry enough, by anything else they do. His meal is an entirely individual affair. In technical terms it is pure private good." Well, some people *do* get satisfaction from eating things that are not available to others. And every bit of consumed food increases the price of food, which is a loss to all other potential eaters, in the short run. In this sense almost everything is a positional good. A fundamental notion of economics is that what I have, you cannot have. There are only a few exceptions, such as public health.

Hirsch offers four major examples of "positional goods"—automobiles, suburbanization, vacationland, and education. In his analysis, anyone who gets an automobile adds to the congestion on the highways which reduces the quality of owning an automobile. But for whom? People who get cars gain, while those who already have cars lose, but only after a certain saturation level is reached. The highway pioneers benefited as the number of automobiles increased so that mass production lowered the cost and provided profits for technological improvements, and the market built up to a point where paved roads and service stations became ubiquitous. Only after that level did congestion begin to become a problem. And it is very strange that Hirsch does not mention the conventional response to automobile congestion—building better roads.

Suburbanization is treated the same way. Everyone who moves to the suburbs degrades the suburbs. Hirsch credits a colleague with pointing out that the response is to build more suburbs farther out, but at a cost of longer commuting time. Too bad that colleague did not mention the response to the commuting problem—the suburbanization of jobs to shorten the commute. Regarding land, it is true, as Will Rogers said, "they ain't making any more of it." There is some ultimate limit to land use—fortunately we are nowhere near it. The great bulk of land in America, and even in England, is undeveloped. We are continually increasing the effective amount of usable land by improving access to it through cars and better roads.

Education is of particular concern to Hirsch. By expanding the number of university graduates, the value of a university education in its "positional" terms to the degree holder is reduced. Hirsch is a professor at Warwick, one of the English "red-brick" universities; he should know that their expansion increases the value of degrees from the *real* universities—Oxford and Cambridge. The same is true in the United States. The growth of the University of Massachusetts does not downgrade the worth of a Harvard degree.

In his attempt to discredit market economics he employs some even odder notions. To illustrate why a society cannot be based upon pure self-interest, he quotes *Catch-22*'s Yossarian: "It doesn't make a damn bit of difference who wins the war to somebody who is dead." Right, you cannot pay a man enough to die, which is why military forces have not appealed to pecuniary self-interest, but provided other incentives. In any event, a neo-classical economist would respond that the Army Air Corps was not asking Yossarian to die, but to risk his life, and offered him certain benefits and disbenefits to take that risk. Capitalist societies do not expect kamikazes. The most dangerous military spe-

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B. Bruce-Briggs is senior research associate at the Center for Policy Research. His new book, The War Against the Automobile, *will be published in the fall.*

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cialties attract the most risk-prone volunteers—fighter pilots also fly low in high-powered sports cars and paratroopers brawl for fun in the bars around Fort Bragg.

As another example of the limit of the public benefits derived from individuals maximizing their self-interest, Hirsch points out that not even the most devout Chicago School economists believe that justice should be for sale. Of course not—laissez-faire economics rests on voluntary contract, but does not permit transactions by force. "Justice" means the right to deploy state power to seize property. A market system requires unbribed judges and officials for the same reason that it prohibits businessmen from employing gunmen to deal with competitors. The function of the state in a laissez-faire economy is to protect property from force; if the state can be bought, there is no property, no liberty, and no incentive to produce.

The obvious remedy to "positional competition" is merely to raise the stakes. People must pay more for exclusive resorts, suburbs, and extended education. This Hirsch rejects as a "rat race," compounding the problem. Instead, he would go the other way. There is a need for change in the "social ethic." More goods and services must be taken out of the market economy. As a start, he would ease the conflict by lowering the ultimate stakes. To reduce the competition for degrees, he would lessen the rewards for education. He advocates consideration of public policies to reduce the pay and perquisite differentials within the professions and business. "A reduction in the monetary attraction can be expected to reduce total demand for such jobs by shedding potential applicants for whom the pay advantage is dominant."

His solution to crowding and the high costs of other "positional goods" lies in "making access to such goods less attainable with money and more available without it—that is to say, by partially removing positional goods from the commercial sector...." In other words, Hirsch would respond to the excessive demand by lowering the price. The first week of a baby econ. course is adequate to deal with that idea. Even worse is his steadfast failure to recognize that the price rise promoted by increased demand feeds back to increase supply.

There are indeed a few positional goods: some jobs—there can be but one President of the United States and one Archbishop of Canterbury. The inherent status value of some commodities has long been recognized. When "everybody" gets X, it is no longer "exclusive." Therefore, as the *nouveaux* bedeck their women in mink, the old money buys sable or wears ski parkas and forms societies for the protection of wildlife. Those goods that are necessarily limited by historical production are "positional." There are only so many Rembrandts, Duesenbergs, Williamsburgs, and Aspens, but here too, the market and polity adjust. The price of fine art is out of sight, so people collect "folk art" (e.g., old weather vanes); the staggering prices of classic cars have created "special interest cars" (e.g., DeSotos); lines at historical sites have led to restorations in every community and reconstructions (e.g., Disneyland's Main Street); growing crowds at places of natural beauty have led to the opening up of new parks and sites (e.g., crowded slopes at Aspen led promoters to develop Vail).

Hirsch ignores these basic variations on this theme. It appears that he has other objectives in mind. Buried in the book, but central to its thinking, is the old dream of ridding the world of selfishness and competition, which Hirsch blames on capitalism and its obsession with growth. In his favorable reception of *Social Limits* in the *New York Review of Books*, economist Robert L. Heilbroner describes this goal as "the replacement of the individualistic acquisitive ethos by a social, communally oriented perspective," as, for example, "the change in public behavior on which so many visitors to China have remarked." What a shame that he wrote that just a few weeks before a report of how the Chinese find it necessary to deploy armies of police merely to prevent people from becoming crushed in the rush to get on buses. How odd it is that only in the "individualistic" capitalist states people have the social discipline to queue, and not to get up on tip-toe in crowds. In the socialist countries, people are kept in line with clubs. How very odd it is that the propensity towards rip-offs and "I'm all right Jack" screw-your-neighbor acquisitiveness seems to spread as we move toward a more collective society.

Conservative thinkers have always held that our limited stock of beneficence should be carefully husbanded, invested only in the most important institutions—the family, the church, the nation—and not squandered on mere economic activities. Hirsch is entitled to his values, but his audience has a right to expect that he will make his case competently. A superior development of similar ideas is found in *The Limits to Satisfaction* by William Leiss, a Canadian professor of "environmental studies and political science"; I believe Leiss' book is incorrect, but it is not foolish.

What is oddest about Hirsch's book is the response to it. He credits more than a dozen readers inside and outside its sponsoring foundation for their "comments and criticism." The reviews have been almost uniformly favorable. Such reputable periodicals as the *Economist* and the *Times* raved about it. (The *New York Times* assigned it to a political correspondent for *Rolling Stone*—he did not like it because he could not follow the argument.) The usually prudent George F. Will of *Newsweek* took it seriously. The only hostile review to my knowledge has been by Martin Meyer, in *American Scholar*, who pointed out its obvious flaw: Hirsch is an Englishman, yet he scarcely mentions the key issue—class. Growth has benefited those people who obtained automobiles, suburbs, vacation cottages, and university educations, but it has cost those who already have them. It is not to be expected that the better sort would benefit from further growth. This point was made by Rudolph Klein and this writer in *Commentary* several years ago and was developed at length in Wilfred Beckerman's *In Defense of Economic Growth*, which Hirsch cites. His disregarding of this issue is suspicious, to say the least. In fact, a vast body of thought called "welfare economics" deals with these very problems of who gains and who loses from various economic interchanges. Overall, it can be argued that the beneficiaries of growth far outnumber the losers. The person who moves from an urban tenement to a suburb gains much more than the

A Note from the Publisher

Beginning with the November issue, *The Alternative: An American Spectator* will simply be called *The American Spectator*. The shortened name will make our cover appear a little different at first. But inside the magazine you will find that we will continue to serve up the usual variety of essays, features, and reviews that you have come to expect from *The Alternative: An American Spectator*.

November also marks the beginning of our second decade of publishing. It is a tradition in the publishing world to observe such milestones with special issues featuring articles by the most renowned writers the editor can wheedle into writing for him. We will follow this venerable tradition, but as Tyrrell is still engaged in his wheedling, I'll have to wait until next month to tell you who we will display in our Tenth Anniversary Issue.

Stay tuned.

—Baron Von Kannon

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existing occupants lose. The history of economic growth over the past two centuries has been a steady improvement of the lot of the masses, and a slow slide in the quality of life of the privileged. Hirsch is following a line more vigorously laid down by Lewis Mumford, John Kenneth Galbraith, and E.J. Mishan in his emphasis on the automobile and suburbia; it is no accident that they are the principal manifestations of mass prosperity.

Hirsch is very careful to avoid the term, but in his proposal to reduce commercial (i.e., consumer) choices and to increase social (i.e., government) choices he is, of course, advocating socialism. He recommends "public allocation" of commodities. He would level incomes in business and the professions, not in academia and government. His critique of capitalist selfishness has been made much more learnedly and elegantly by a long line of conservative and socialist thinkers (to my mind, the most attractive exposition is R.H. Tawney's *The Acquisitive Society*). The socialists at least expressed primary concern with the welfare of the lower classes. Hirsch cares only for the privileged. The support and endorsement of this study by one of America's leading foundations and its praise in the establishment press is an ominous development. There is a word that can be appropriately employed to describe the deployment of state power to achieve the social and economic goals of the prosperous—that word is fascism. The significance of this book and its reception is that the bourgeoisie is getting its back up. □

BOOK REVIEW

Secrets, Spies and Scholars: Blueprint of the Essential CIA
Ray S. Cline / Acropolis Books Ltd. / $10.00

Robert L. McTiernan

Intelligence agencies and activities are taken for granted today. Yet only since Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in 1941 has the United States government been able to rely on a centralized, civilian authority to gather and evaluate strategic information. That step resulted largely from the quiet persuasion and assistance of British officials, such as Winston Churchill, who, with a Secret Service of their own dating from the time of Elizabeth I, could foresee the crucial role intelligence would play in the inevitable conflict between the United States and Nazi Germany. Thus, our own involvement in the intelligence world stemmed from a covert political operation by the British government, an irony that the author of *Secrets, Spies and Scholars* makes sure is not lost on his readers.

Ray S. Cline joined the OSS in 1943 and retired from government service thirty years later. Blending personal memoirs with detailed history, he examines in his book nearly every important issue concerning the Central Intelligence Agency. As befits a former Deputy Director for Intelligence of the CIA and a former Director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Cline's approach is analytical (and in fact a bit dry) rather than anecdotal. Of special interest are his assessments of the various CIA Directors and his account of J. Edgar Hoover's repeated attempts to capture control of foreign as well as domestic intelligence. Underlying these details, however, are two basic themes.

The first stresses the primacy of the intelligence as opposed to the operations function of the CIA. Cline emphasizes the need for a neutral agency—with no interest in increasing the defense budget or vindicating State Department policy—to keep policy-makers informed. In addition to keeping track of current events, this agency must provide "estimates" of what other governments will do in the future, and Cline manages to convey what an extraordinarily difficult task this is. A research analyst must sift through enormous amounts of data, and then try to make an accurate assessment of the political, military, or economic situation in some distant country or area of the world. Most of this data—more than 80 percent according to Harry Howe Ransom—comes from open sources such as foreign broadcasts and photo reconnaissance satellites, and much of it eventually proves worthless. There is always the danger that so much information will simply overwhelm analysts. In fact, the Pike Committee has attributed the CIA's much-criticized failure to predict the 1973 Yom Kippur War to the sheer volume of reports the Agency received from the Middle East. With a flood of "an average of hundreds of reports each week," few analysts had time to digest more than a small portion of them.

The CIA's blunders in the intelligence area are by now well known. But Cline reminds us that the Agency predicted China's first nuclear explosion and detected the Sino-Soviet split as early as 1956. In contrast to those who portray it as a mindless tool of Cold Warriors, he credits the CIA with moderating the Joint Chiefs' fear of a Soviet attack in Europe during the 1950s. And along with many students of the Vietnam War, Cline claims that the Agency frequently angered policy-makers with its sober assessment of the effectiveness of U.S. bombing and the chances for military success.

Though Cline spent his career mainly as an intelligence officer, he does offer some observations about covert actions, the second theme of *Secrets, Spies and Scholars*. These operations, of course, are not intelligence activities at all, but are attempts to influence events in other countries. Most such projects have done little to further U.S. foreign policy goals and some, for instance the Bay of Pigs, have been total disasters. Yet the CIA has repeatedly overestimated the value and feasibility of peacetime covert operations. Cline attributes this, in part, to the overly-romanticized stories of the OSS's wartime exploits. But it was two of the Agency's own covert "successes" that encouraged the illusion that it could meddle anywhere in the world with impunity. In 1953, the CIA reputedly overthrew the leftist premier of Iran, Mohammed Mossadegh, and restored the Shah to his throne. One year later, the CIA supposedly deposed Arbenz Guzman in Guatemala. Cline reports, however, that in both cases the CIA rendered no more than "marginal assistance" to strong, indigenous forces already opposed to the regime. When the CIA launched an extensive effort to topple President Sukarno of Indonesia in 1958, the result was "ignominious failure."

Cline argues that the main practical problem with covert paramilitary operations is that United States involvement is almost always revealed. Then, the same political pressures that mandated covert assistance in the first place usually force the United States to withdraw its support. Cline, however, is not opposed to all covert operations; he praises the undercover aid given to anti-Communist political, labor, and cultural groups in Western Europe after World War II. According to Cline, this program was adopted at the urging of George Kennan in order to counter a massive Soviet effort to undermine democracy in Western Europe. Even the Church Committee conceded in its Report that the program has "passed retrospective public judgment."

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In his final chapter, "Blueprint for the Future," Cline discusses recent revelations, reforms, and his own proposals for change. He attributes most of the anti-CIA sentiment of the past few years to Watergate-era paranoia and, citing the Church Committee's retraction of its Chairman's statement that the Agency was a "rogue elephant," claims that the CIA's abuses were "not massive." In addition, he points out that most of the wrongdoing was uncovered in 1973 by the Agency itself in an effort to correct past irregularities. For some suspicious practices, Cline provides innocent explanations: CIA "files" on American citizens, for example, were merely records of routine FBI inquiries to see whether anti-war groups had foreign connections. Cline is doubtless correct that the media overreacted to CIA revelations and that the Agency "has never come close to being an American Gestapo." Nevertheless, he seems to ignore what disturbed most Americans and threatened civil liberties: the government's belief that opponents of its policies were enemies of the nation.

Cline makes the more telling point that the most egregious CIA excesses, such as domestic spying, were the direct result of pressures from Presidents Johnson and Nixon. He is especially critical of President Nixon and Henry Kissinger for impairing the Agency's independence by suppressing intelligence that could not be used to bolster administration policies. Also, during Nixon's tenure, the Office of National Estimates (which Cline helped to establish in 1950) was replaced with a system of preparing intelligence estimates upon request by the National Security Council. Ostensibly a move to improve the relevance and timeliness of reports, Cline sees it as a "retrograde" step that increased White House control of intelligence analysis.

Considering his belief that most of the CIA's wounds were White House inflicted, Cline's sympathy for greater Congressional oversight is not surprising. If Congress had been a better watchdog, successive Presidents would not have dared to push the Agency into embarassing enterprises. Like most serious students of the subject, Cline blames the lack of responsible oversight on Congress itself. As the Church Committee reported, the Senate subcommittee with chief oversight responsibility convened only six times between 1971 and 1974. Moreover, the attitude of Congress toward the CIA during most of the last thirty years has been, as Cline characterizes it, "supportive rather than critical." The executive branch did keep the oversight subcommittees informed about major covert projects and, as Deputy Director for Intelligence, Cline participated in many of the briefings. Not surprisingly, many members of Congress who also participated have since suffered "convenient lapses of memory."

More than a year has passed since former President Ford set up an Operations Advisory Group and a Committee on Foreign Intelligence to oversee all intelligence activities and covert operations. Cline praises these reforms for increasing the accountability of the various intelligence agencies without threatening their independence. But he also makes a modest proposal of his own—abolish the CIA. This is not as revolutionary as it sounds. The acronym, "CIA," is a "worldwide public relations liability," and to remedy this, Cline suggests that the tasks the CIA now performs be divided between two new organizations.

The Central Institute of Foreign Affairs Research would be the heart of Cline's new system. This agency would supervise the budget and work of all intelligence analysts, including those in the State and Defense Departments. All intelligence activities would be managed by the Director of Central Intelligence, who would be elevated to the Cabinet. Keeping analysts in a separate agency would help to shield them from the suspicion Americans have for clandestine activities. Placing the responsibility for analysis in one bureau and the Director in the Cabinet might even improve the coordination of intelligence activity. (But it would not remove the greatest barrier to better management: the

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fact that nearly 90 percent of the intelligence budget is controlled by the Defense Department.)

The other branch, the Clandestine Services Staff, would be responsible for conducting espionage, i.e., the clandestine collection of information. Espionage is a rather limited tool for gathering intelligence, if only because in tightly-controlled societies, such as the Soviet Union or the nations of Eastern Europe, infiltration is next to impossible. Most information secretly collected by the CIA comes from defectors, electronic bugging devices, and agents in the Third World. Though less reliable than information collected openly, it may provide the only clues as to what unfriendly governments or terrorist groups are planning or how they will react under certain circumstances. "Nobody has ever been able to photograph intentions," as former CIA Director James Schlesinger put it.

Cline does not provide for any permanent organization to conduct covert political and paramilitary actions. Small-scale, short-lived programs of economic and military aid could be undertaken, but only after a formal decision by the President on the recommendation of the Operations Advisory Group. Cline, understandably, assigns covert action a minor place in his scheme. Despite all the recent publicity, the number of such operations has been declining steadily since 1968. Further, as Cline points out, existing laws make even small-scale covert projects highly impractical. The Hughes-Ryan Amendment, passed by Congress in 1974, prohibits covert operations, except for those the President finds "important to" the national security and reports "in a timely fashion" to the "appropriate" committees of Congress. (The cut-off of aid last year to the pro-Western factions in the Angolan Civil War is a good example of the Hughes-Ryan Amendment at work.) Even though the Senate has consolidated oversight responsibility in a single Intelligence Committee, so many members of Congress are still entitled to classified information that it is nearly impossible to keep covert actions covert. Press leaks and a full and public policy-debate are inevitable.

The best chance of combining effective oversight with secrecy lies in establishing a single Congressional committee with full and exclusive rights to information about covert action. Citing the political barriers to such a joint committee, Cline instead recommends two separate intelligence oversight committees: one in the Senate that would focus on foreign policy and intelligence, and another in the House that would deal mainly with budgetary problems. This proposal, which has wide support, is eminently sensible, as is Cline's suggestion that less sensitive intelligence reports be made available to all members of Congress.

Still, there is a risk in making all these changes. The exhaustive review of the intelligence community during the past few years by two Congressional committees, the Rockefeller and Murphy Commissions, and the press may have had a needed "cathartic effect," to use Senator Howard Baker's phrase. But it seems that nearly every institutional reform that could prevent future abuses has now been adopted. As Cline himself reminds us, the intelligence community must now "rebuild its prestige, spirit and competence." Reshuffling that community again would once more draw public attention to it and interrupt the period of quiet renewal it so sorely needs.

The most important foreign policy problem we face today is not the secret activity of federal agencies but the fact that, since the end of the Vietnam War, the United States has not had a coherent foreign policy. This uncertainty will inevitably end, but not until the current debate over the CIA—which is really a debate over the proper goals of American foreign policy—is settled. The Agency's critics appear intent on trimming its capabilities to a point suitable for a drastically reduced American role in world affairs. But those who see a prudent policy of containing Soviet power and supporting liberal democracy as the only viable course for the United States realize that a strong and trusted Central Intelligence Agency is essential. □

BOOK REVIEW

New Lives: Survivors of the Holocaust Living in America
Dorothy Rabinowitz / Knopf / $8.95

Naomi Decter

New Lives is about East European Jews who lived through the holocaust and came to America after 1945. Dorothy Rabinowitz studied the available background material and included it in the book: She describes, for example, the liberation of some of the concentration camps—which armies liberated them, what steps they took against the administrators; she explains the processing of the survivors once they'd reached America—which agencies they dealt with, and what services the various agencies provided. Primarily, however, *New Lives* is the story of survival as told by the survivors themselves. Rabinowitz talked with 108 survivors, and it is through portraits of about 15 of the most representative—and, clearly, most striking—that Rabinowitz answers the question "What does it mean to have survived the most irrational and ghoulish persecution?"

One of the most interesting of the portraits is Abe Flekier's. Flekier was thirteen when he was conscripted into a Nazi labor gang in Poland. He came to this country six years later, burdened by a rage that had been the cause of numerous fights—and at least a bit of legal trouble—in postwar Europe. His greatest fear was that he would never again be fit for normal society. He has, in fact, flourished here. He joined the army shortly after his arrival; despite his lack of education—and of English—he was given a position of responsibility. During the Korean war, he was looked upon as a sort of expert in the art of survival. Indeed, he acquitted himself well in the war and left the army with an excellent record—despite a propensity to react violently to any remark he considered anti-Semitic. He is now a furniture dealer in Kansas City where he lives with his Israeli wife and their two children. The need to fight is still with him, but it is rarely indulged. When it *is* indulged—in response to some form of anti-Semitism—it seems far from a manifestation of anti-social tendencies.

Rebecca Spanner, on the other hand, was not at all disposed to do battle when she arrived here. She was sent, with her husband and daughter, to a small Texas town. She went with the firm conviction that as a dependent it was her duty to accept what was given and to adapt quickly to the demands of the new situation. She went so far as to assure one hostess that she had not eaten meat for ten years—when actually there had been plenty of meat in Europe after the war—because she thought that was what the woman wanted to hear. Rebecca's adaptability is not a function of fear but of a tough sort of pragmatism. And so, though she did, years later, disabuse her friend as to the conditions in Europe after the liberation, her belief that adaptability is the key to getting along in life still stands.

S. Gordon chose to adapt to the new life

Naomi Decter is a researcher at Newsweek *magazine.*

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by cutting himself off from the old. He wanted to forget the past—the wife and three children he lost to the gas chambers. He decided that if he were to remarry, it would be to a woman who did not suffer through the camps and who would not bear children. He did, in fact, marry a woman beyond childbearing age who had left Germany in 1937. He realizes now that it was a mistake; he regrets the sterility of his life. He consoles himself with activity in the Jewish community and with friends, but he looks on with pain as his friends raise their families.

Stella's commitment to life is unflagging—after two narrow escapes from death. She was sixteen when she was sent to Maidanek. There, she was saved from the gas chamber by her older sister, Rutka; Rutka traded identities with Stella when it became apparent that she was a candidate for gassing. Stella went in Rutka's place to a labor camp, from which she later escaped; Rutka died in Maidanek's gas chamber. Shortly after the war, Stella married a fellow survivor and came to America—where she was again faced with the prospect of death. Years after her arrival here, she found that she had cancer. Doctor after doctor refused to operate, on the grounds that it was hopeless. She did, however, in the end find one who would. After the operation, Stella lived making deals with herself: She would be satisfied to live just until her younger child started school, until her son became bar mitzvah. Over fifteen years later, she is still very much alive. She is, in fact, bursting with vitality; attractive, witty, brash, and cheerful.

These people and the others portrayed in *New Lives* differ from other purveyors of the survivors' sensibilities in one essential way: They do not see themselves as objects for intellectual or historical self-analysis. That is not to say that they are oblivious to the special nature of their experience. As Rabinowitz makes very clear, they recognize their uniqueness and realize that they have some fundamental understanding—of the holocaust, if of nothing else—lacking in those of us fortunate enough to have missed out on the horror. But they have not made the study of their past and its effects on them their life's work. Their thoughts on the subject are, therefore, entirely personal, uncomplicated by the intellectual's and historian's need to find some general application of individual experience.

Some general preoccupations do, however, emerge as the survivors describe their individual experiences. These are, presumably, the "insistently recurrent themes" Rabinowitz discovered among the survivors she met.

One of these themes is the relation between character and survival. All feel, it seems, that something other than sheer accident accounts for their surviving while their families and friends died around them; that they must have had or done something that others did not. Some have

The light dawns...

England's new Ambassador to the United States warns us of the dangers of social democracy in...

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.'s *The Future That Doesn't Work*

As Tom Bethell recently wrote in The Alternative: An American Spectator, "There is now a good deal of intellectual resistance to the ideals of social democracy, to the fundamental tenet...that government must attend to every need of the citizenry....In a sense the author whose presence is perhaps most telling here [in Tyrrell's book] is Peter Jay, the newly-appointed Ambassador to the U.S. Jay is the son of a former Labour cabinet minister and the son-in-law of the present Prime Minister, James Callaghan. Fifteen years ago, at Oxford, Jay was a leading light of the trendy left, a Wykemist and a wit, president of the Oxford Union. Today, however, Jay has clearly seen another light. Here he is...warning us against the dangers of social democracy."

As Jay admonishes, "We in Britain are a confused and unhappy people....So too are our many friends in the United States who rightly see in the anguish of the United Kingdom the advanced stages of a disease...that is beginning to show its unmistakable symptoms in the United States."

What sort of disease evokes the concern of such a prominent representative of Britain's Labour government? According to Jay, Britain's affliction is simultaneous inflation and unemployment, caused by monopoly union bargaining power and the government's commitment to full employment.

Jay's essay is just one of the important and stimulating chapters in R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.'s new book, *The Future That Doesn't Work: Social Democracy's Failures in Britain*.

Concerned about the state of public policy and liberty in America, Tyrrell recently turned to England to learn what social democracy has wrought in a country whose language, culture, and political traditions are remarkably like our own. Tyrrell's findings are now available for the first time in a provocative collection of essays written by some of the finest students of British socialism on either side of the Atlantic.

In addition to Peter Jay's contribution, *The Future That Doesn't Work* includes the following:

American Contributors

IRVING KRISTOL, co-editor of *The Public Interest*, on the intellectual death of socialism.

LESLIE LENKOWSKY, one of America's leading authorities on welfare, on the welfare state—does it contribute to Britain's low productivity?

HARRY SCHWARTZ, a member of the editorial board of the *New York Times*, on the suffering National Health Service.

JAMES Q. WILSON, professor of government at Harvard, on how once-peaceful Britain copes with its rising crime rate.

British Contributors

SAMUEL BRITTAN, economic commentator for the *Financial Times*, on the economic contradictions of social democracy.

PATRICK COSGRAVE, a contributor to *The Spectator* and the London *Daily Telegraph*, on the postwar failures of the Conservative Party.

COLIN WELCH, deputy editor of the London *Daily Telegraph*, on the slipshod house that Fabian intellectuals built.

PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE, associate editor of the London *Sunday Telegraph*, on the lockgrip power of British trade unions.

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definite ideas about what that was: For one it was his daring, for another adaptability, for yet another the need to be strong for others.

The survivors also have different understandings of the special obligations of survivorhood. But the underlying motive—common to all—is the duty to maintain some connection with their past; the determination to remember where they came from and whom they left behind, and the determination not to allow others to forget.

There is need for such determination. For the hard cold facts of the holocaust are in danger of being forgotten. One aspect of the danger is dwelt on in the chapter of *New Lives* entitled "Honor." Survivors are asked—by people claiming special understanding of human nature or the nature of the world—to explain, please, why they and their dead children acquiesced in the horror perpetrated against them; why, they are asked, did they *allow* themselves to be walled in, starved, tortured, killed by the Germans and their accomplices? That those who lived through the horror consent to consider such questions seriously—and with patience—testifies to the depth of their commitment to history. The implication of the questions is, clearly, that the Jews somehow provoked, and thus in a sense must have deserved, their vile treatment; that had they been different, they would not have been savaged so brutally. To implicate the victims in their own murder is to minimize the crime against the Jews; and that the survivors cannot permit. And so, rather than giving way to inarticulate rage, they point out that in many cases the Jews did rise up violently—the fact that uprisings only hastened death is significant only to those of us who believe that it is better to be alive than dead, even when death brings honor. For the most part, however, the Jews could not and did not resist. The simplest, and thus most convincing, explanation is this quotation from an unnamed survivor, the epigraph to the honor chapter: "Authorities on the holocaust. Great thinkers. Historians. Let them put this in their books: that by the time we walked to the tragedy we were already emaciated and enslaved. Hungry. That it is human, not weak, not to want to believe that someone is out to murder you, and that on the way to the slaughterhouse he will also drain you of your possessions, of your strength, the gold from your teeth, and the hair from your head. Great intellectuals. Great writers. Jews!"

Those "authorities on the holocaust" are not, however, the only—or even the chief—threat to the truth. For there are people out there—those fashionably right-minded people who are, for the time being at least, our moral trend-setters—who deny the most basic truth of the holocaust. For them, it seems, certain facts are too trifling to be worthy of notice. That Jews were confined in the Warsaw ghetto as part of an official policy of extermination, while American blacks are free to move away from Harlem and are not, nor have ever been, threatened with mass extinction—this is considered a fine distinction; for the upholders of moral standards, Harlem is as much a ghetto as was Warsaw. Equally fine, it seems to them, is the distinction made by some sticklers for detail between the fate of Europe's Jews and the condition of America's blacks; spiritually speaking, genocide is as much genocide when it allegedly deprives people of rights and "cultural heritage" as when it actually deprives them of life.

If anything can counter such fancy footwork, it is the calm and straightforward account provided by *New Lives* of what actually happened in Europe thirty years ago. What actually happened was that millions of people were systematically killed simply because they were Jews. If the experience had crippled the lucky few who survived, there would, probably—and sadly—be no need for constant vigilance against distortion: The world loves a loser. There must, indeed, be cripples among the survivors, but they do not speak for the majority. Rabinowitz' survivors are not in any way maimed; nor are they remarkably heroic. They did, after living through hell, go out and start over again—proof of a fundamental courage and spiritual strength. But they are, in the end, simply human, and—though Rabinowitz' decision to translate their words into fine and evocative language is something of an interference—their humanness gives the lie to those who see the holocaust as a sort of pyschological laboratory as well as to those who use it as a political symbol. □

BOOK REVIEW

A Book of Common Prayer
Joan Didion / Simon and Schuster / $8.85

Patricia S. Coyne

C.S. Lewis once compared religions to soup. Some, he said, are "thick" and some are "clear." The thick religions enjoy orgies and ecstasies and mysteries. The clear ones are philosophical, ethical, and universalizing. One is emotional, subjective; the other is detached and objective. Only Christianity, says Lewis, demands the combination. "It takes a convert from central Africa and tells him to obey an enlightened universalist ethic: it takes a twentieth-century academic prig like me and tells me to go fasting to a Mystery, to drink the blood of the Lord."

Lewis' distinction, with a different emphasis, might also be applied to literature, and especially to the novel. Some novels are exclusively thick, some are clear, and some have managed to combine, as Lewis puts it, "both the child and the man, both the savage and the citizen, both the head and the belly."

But until now, women novelists have been notably unsuccessful at managing the combination. Their writing tends to be either thick like the Brontës' or clear like Jane Austen's. They can write subjectively while disregarding a universal or impersonal judgment upon what they are writing, or they can speak exclusively in an official, detached voice while disregarding any personal divergences from the impersonal.

Of all the good women novelists I have read, Joan Didion alone writes with a sensibility and vision that are both thick and clear, emotional and detached. In her newest novel, for instance, she ends a chapter with a dismissive description of a journal her heroine kept:

> On those pages she had tried to rid herself of her dreams, and these dreams seemed to deal only with sexual surrender and infant death, commonplaces of the female obsessional life. We all have the same dreams.

This passage perhaps defines and identifies the thick, clear voice more than it employs it, but even so it transcends the range of a writer who writes in a single voice. Jane Austen could not, as Joan Didion does, identify with a "female obsessional life," for had she done so, she could not have dealt with it on an exclusively impersonal level. And Charlotte Brontë, whose material *was* the "female obsessional life," was therefore incapable of wryly dismissing it.

If Jane Austen dreamed of mutilation or death, she covered it nicely. If Charlotte Brontë struggled for a larger context within which she could weigh her dreams of mutilation and death, she too covered it

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Patricia S. Coyne is Washington editor of Private Practice. *She and her husband are presently writing a book on energy.*

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nicely. And it seems that until now, serious women writers have drifted in the wake of either one or the other of these two archetypal female novelists. They have been unwilling or unable to meld the two modes of expression. Except when they write children's stories, which is another subject, women still tend to be either thick like Joyce Carol Oates or clear like Muriel Spark. Alone among women novelists, Joan Didion seems able to deal with personal and subjective experiences in a universal voice.

Now none of this is meant to imply an automatic admiration for writers who combine thickness and clarity. Both Fitzgerald and Mailer intermittently combine the voices, Hemingway does so invariably, and many novelists who do not are better than they. Still, when the two voices mingle and harmonize, the combination adds texture and richness and it works at the same time to neutralize weaknesses which the exclusive voices can tend to emphasize. The murkiness of the thick voice becomes clarified, the thinness of the clear voice is given depth.

And I feel the combined use of the thick and the clear voice is especially important if feminine feelings and emotions and experiences are to gain literary stature alongside those of the masculine. Listen to Joan Didion in an essay from *Slouching Toward Bethlehem*:

> It is time for the baby's birthday party: a white cake, strawberry-marshmallow icecream, a bottle of champagne saved from another party. In the evening, after she has gone to sleep, I kneel beside the crib and touch her face, where it is pressed against the slats, with mine. She is an open and trusting child, unprepared for and unaccustomed to the ambushes of family life, and perhaps it is just as well that I can offer her little of that life. I would like to give her more. I would like to promise her that she will grow up with a sense of her cousins and of rivers with fried chicken and her hair uncombed, would like to give her *home* for her birthday, but we live differently now and I can promise her nothing like that. I give her a xylophone and a sundress from Madeira, and promise to tell her a funny story.

Joan Didion's subject is the feminine, but unlike other writers who draw from the same material, she neither romanticizes nor patronizes it, nor, as is common today, does she politicize it. She writes as a woman with uniquely female emotions and reactions, but she manages to retain a vision of the universal human experience against which her own can be viewed. And in so doing she is carving out a literary corner for traditionally female concerns like motherhood and coping and compliance alongside traditionally male concerns such as war and courage and conquest.

Until *A Book of Common Prayer*, I had always thought she had done this more successfully in her essays than in her fiction. And indeed, from what I had heard of *A Book of Common Prayer* I was prepared to find fault.

The very setting of the novel put me off. The action takes place in Central America, and it has been my experience that when North Americans carry their typewriters South, they rarely get beyond the business of applauding themselves for being there.

I was hesitant as well because of a certain tone in an essay she had written about conceiving this novel. I suspected that she was beginning to feel that the stuff of her imagination was worthy, by definition alone, of being recorded as art, rather than as raw material ready to be fit into context. For me, although perhaps not for other critics, the approach would have destroyed her value.

But as I read the first chapters of *A Book of Common Prayer* I realized that everything would be all right. Joan Didion's imaginary Central American country is neither self-consciously quaint nor indulgently grotesque. It does provide, however, a unique atmosphere which compliments and highlights both the characters and their actions.

> Boca Grande is not a land of contrasts. On the contrary, Boca Grande is relentlessly "the same": the cathedral is not Spanish Colonial but corrugated aluminum. There is a local currency but the American dollar is legal tender. The politics of the country at first appear to offer contrast, involving as they do the "colorful" Latin juxtaposition of guerrilleros and colonels, but when the tanks are put away and the airport reopens nothing has actually changed in Boca Grande. There are no waterfalls of note, no ruins of interest, no chic boutiques...to provide dramatic cultural foil to voodoo in the hills.
>
> In fact there is no voodoo in the hills.
>
> In fact there are no hills, only the flat bush and the lifeless sea.

And although the characters in the novel do act and react in ways which reflect the author's imagination—her "obsessional life"—still, her main concern is not with their acting so much as with an attempt to discern why. Didion writes with a clear sense of right and wrong, natural and unnatural. She is in no way satisfied with the kind of motiveless action-reaction syndrome which makes so much modern fiction unreadable.

A Book of Common Prayer is narrated by a weary and dying 60-year-old American anthropologist, widow of one of Boca Grande's landed gentry. The first person here is a character in her own right, but her voice is much like Didion's and therefore lends credibility and dignity to a subject which could otherwise become melodramatic or hysterical.

The story she tells is that of Charlotte Douglas, an attractive but unfortunate middle-aged Californian to whom many bad things have happened, among them her 18-year-old daughter's going underground as a criminal revolutionary and

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then suffering a pregnancy which ended in lingering and tragic death.

Charlotte has reacted by becoming an aimless drifter. Her psychological dishonesty and her delusions have reached the point of rendering her nearly incapable of functioning, the kind of woman who up to now has been dealt with in literature as funny—a character—or has been written off in exasperation. But Didion refuses to dismiss silly and incompetent women as being merely silly and incompetent. She sets out to discover how Charlotte's own make-up and her environment and the things that have happened to her have combined to turn her into what she has become, and although the author acknowledges in the end that her quest has not been entirely successful, still Didion can see in Charlotte proportions which approach the heroic.

The new women's consciousness tries to insist that beneath the maulings of environment, women, except that they are more highly sexed, are just like men. But a constant theme running through this novel and through much of Didion's work is that while there is a discernible behavioral norm in the human condition, woman diverge from the norm in ways inherently different from men. And what's more, says Didion, women's divergences are neither more worthy nor less worthy, but instead are *equally* worthy of literary examination.

Norman Mailer tests his courage by walking Harlem at night. Fitzgerald is drawn to expensively turned-out women. And Hemingway feels good when he's fishing. But women cry when a dispassionate view would hold that there is nothing sad, and Joan Didion would hold that that is every bit as significant. □

BOOK REVIEW

No Souvenirs, Journal, 1957-1969
Mircea Eliade / Harper & Row / $15.00

Juliana Geran Pilon

Known and loved in America for works like *Patterns of Comparative Religion, Cosmos and History, The Sacred and the Profane,* and many others, Mircea Eliade is famous throughout the world as a historian of religion and philosopher of culture. He has uncovered the archetypes of sacred consciousness, convinced that the West can learn from ancient mythology: Eliade explores the forms of ritual—that primordial rehearsal of commitment to the Author, the reaffirmation of faith in the basic human scenario. While most twentieth-century philosophers of psyche were analyzing the secular musings and aberrations of our cerebral hemispheres, Eliade was perusing prayer. By studying worship, he unveiled basic patterns of man's attempt to find cosmic meaning. At a time when modern confusion and disillusion threaten a rerun of prehistory, Eliade's insights into the earliest modes of finding inner harmony, of recapturing creation, of transcending the ephemeral, could serve to reawaken a sense of identity, indeed, a redefinition of beauty. But even as his philosophy inspires those who read him, his personality endears him to those who know him. Eliade is not only a man of genius, of dynamic exuberance; he is disarmingly gentle.

How could his journal be called *No Souvenirs*? A man who still consults the poets of his native Romania for inspiration (he would read passionately from Eminescu at literary gatherings in his home), who remembers in intimate detail his land and its music? Throughout my house are Romanian artifacts he and his wife Christinel have given us over the years, reminders of a past in a country we have known in the beginning of life, a land of beauty neither can forget. "No souvenirs" means that all is gone—only his eyeglasses remain from the country he left forever in 1942, not realizing at the time that he would never return. The books he had shipped were lost. His adolescent novels and short stories are no more. But the young man who used to read voraciously into the night, who would wonder at the monumental and exciting task of understanding man's need for beauty and holiness, for peace as well as magic, needs no souvenirs: He contains the human heritage like an enchanted receptacle.

Eliade radiates knowledge. Even on the most informal occasions, relaxed and sipping his favorite scotch-and-soda, he will ponder upon the meaning of ritual, the need for transcendence as well as conformity among the hippies, or the implications of Kissinger's Spenglerianism. "Perhaps he is right," says Eliade, not resigned so much as bewildered—the West doesn't seem to know what it stands to lose. It doesn't believe, doesn't understand. On occasion this apocalyptic vision is reflected in his journal: "At moments of great melancholy, when I feel the end of Western civilization near, I meditate on destiny and on the lesson that Hector gave us. Deep down, he knew that Troy was destined to perish....I would want us to fall as Hector did. Doing our duty, at peace with our conscience, and, nevertheless, without illusions." That duty, however, includes a relentless faith in human energy and spirit. Thus Eliade's overwhelming optimism: "I have limitless confidence in the creative power of the mind. It seems to me that man will succeed—if he wishes—in remaining free and creative, in any circumstance, cosmic or historical." "If he wishes"—the perpetual, perplexing "if"....

Eliade is, of course, a citizen of the world in the broadest sense, for his contemporaries include Pico della Mirandola no less than Papini, Croce, Balzac, Buddha. Yet his roots are very much in this busy, materialist world of ours on the edge of self-destruction. He asks "How can one live in history without betraying it, without denying it, and still partake of a transhistorical reality?" The agony of such a question has not subsided; Eliade has no answer. Perhaps no answer is possible. He sympathizes, at times, with Hirai's approach: "We have no theology. We dance."

Eliade loves dance, he loves wine, he loves to read. Learning from Proust: "The happiness of *listening* and *remembering*." His scholarly endeavors are remarkably passionate: "I want to show the cathartic function of a correct understanding of myth. It liberates [modern] man from certain inhibitions which made him incapable of *loving* his own prehistory [and history]." That liberation consists of an ardent, almost erotic appreciation of the spirit within each of us. How simple.... Eliade has difficulty understanding the reason for violence, for man's inhumanity to man. He tells horror stories from Communist Romania—of priests tortured for reading the Bible, of innocents in prison fed excrement—and is bewildered. Why is freedom so difficult, love so rare?

Though fascinated with symbol, Eliade is very much aware of this world. He knows that "the ugliness, the boredom, and the exalting of the insignificant of which the artistic creations of the last twenty years make a display are, with nihilism in philosophy, anarchism in social ethics, and violence in political activity, the expres-

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sions of a single, specific existential situation of man in Western societies." (Logical implications of comfort?) He knows, too, how appreciated he is in his own country today. He senses a "suspicion and refusal toward all the authors protected by the regime...whence the passion of the youth for us who are in exile, who for fifteen years have been the target of all the insults of the official powers, from the literary critics to the political police." That passion is very genuine indeed: On my visit to Romania in the summer of 1975 friends and relatives all begged me to send them Eliade's works from America, for the few books they had obtained, illegally, in French editions, had set everyone on fire.

Eliade is keeping his native tradition alive abroad. A source of inspiration to Romanian intellectuals in exile, he meets with the playwright Ionesco, the philosopher Cioran, the critic Călinescu, with the young writers who publish *Cahiers de l'Est* (an East European dissident literary journal stationed in Paris), for the flame of freedom must be kept kindled. Creation, as all life, can thrive only beyond arbitrary force and mindless censorship. Evidently, though, not all limitation is evil. Eliade agrees with Teilhard and Father Danielou that "we have a body and we are here, on earth; we must therefore accept life as it is, as a natural mode of being. We must also accept 'progress'; no use complaining of having been born in an industrial society; we must try to live as *free beings* even in the midst of the most terrible social, technological, psychological conditionings." And if we try, we will succeed. But not if we give up our own essence. Not if we forget what we are: the only animals capable of worship, the only creatures able to comprehend and question the inevitability of our own death. To deny this, and "to think like a materialist or Marxist means giving up the primordial vocation of man. Consequently, to disappear as man. But it is not in vain that this temptation and this risk exists." Will his "vocation" emerge intact?

Fascinated by the experiment, Eliade is watching—not disinterested but still detached, as only a sage can be. In a copy of his journal, which he brought last year on the occasion of his birthday alongside a bottle of wine, he inscribed these words: "these pages—from Paris to Chicago, from Exile to a new citizenship." America is, indeed, his new land. He and his wife are happy here. The University of Chicago, which he joined two decades ago, has embraced them with affection. He works long hours and has good friends. Joe Kitagawa, Paul Ricoeur, and Saul Bellow gather at his home for anecdotes and good food.

Yet exile this is. For, ultimately, Eliade is a son of that rich, small land of clear lakes and wide meadows, so tortured now by both God and man. His origins are simple—his father was an army officer of peasant stock. Upon reading Teilhard, Eliade exclaims in his journal: "What a joy to rediscover in a Western theologian and 'man of science' the optimism of Romanian peasants, they themselves also being Christian but belonging to that 'cosmic Christianity' which has long since disappeared in the West. The peasant believes that the world is good, that it returned to that state after the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Savior. My basic optimism probably finds its source in that certitude." And in the face of imminent global destruction, in spite of Western nihilism, with no souvenirs from home, that certitude persists. □

BOOK REVIEW

America's Moment: 1918
Arthur Walworth / W.W. Norton and Company / $14.95

Robert H. Ferrell

In the twentieth century the United States undoubtedly has had some opportunities to change the world, to reconstitute the world's wickedness or waywardness into something approaching the American dream, and it does seem probable that one such chance for change came at the end of the First World War, in the weeks after the armistice of November 11, 1918. The American people had sent two million soldiers to fight in France. General John J. (Black Jack) Pershing had 42 huge divisions, 39 of them on the line; each division contained over 27,000 men. At the time of the armistice Pershing's men had just taken the Argonne forest, at dreadful cost—the equivalent, in dead, of one of his big divisions. His troops had broken out into open country, and the Germans could not have stopped them short of Berlin. Pershing wanted to turn them loose—contrary to the British and French commanders, Haig and Pétain, who had had enough. In a military sense it was as Walworth describes it, "America's moment."

In a diplomatic sense it was also America's moment, for the Germans had applied to President Woodrow Wilson for an armistice, not to the British or French, and Wilson had set the terms of the armistice according to his own Fourteen Points, announced some months earlier. Partly because of the publicity generated by the American official propaganda organization, the so-called Committee on Public Information, and partly because he was such an obviously large but still unknown quantity, Wilson in reputation stood far above the leaders of the allies. An opportunity for diplomatic leadership was clearly there.

It is a great story, America's moment during the few weeks beginning with the armistice of 1918. Wilson properly chose to make the opportunity diplomatic rather than military. Twenty-six thousand dead soldiers in the Argonne had been a high price, and perhaps it would not be all of the price, for a military opportunity.

The unfortunate part of story ensued—the part that turned the opportunity, however rightly chosen, into a moment rather than an achievement. What was the trouble? What went wrong? It was, of course, a grand accumulation of troubles or errors. The American nation had had little experience with European international affairs since the eighteenth century and the era of independence. The country still prided itself on the ideas of Washington, Jefferson, and Monroe. The British and French were too tired from their awful wartime exertions—nearly a million dead for the British, far more for the French. President Wilson in many ways was a great man, but already had antagonized a majority, perhaps two-thirds, of the membership of the Senate. Goaded by his wife who desired to display some new gowns by the famed couturier Worth, and probably not needing the goad anyway, Wilson desired to be a world prophet (to use the phrase employed by Walworth for the second volume of his Pulitzer Prize-winning Wilson biography of twenty years ago). The trouble with the peacemaking began, and America's moment passed before the Paris Peace Conference opened late in January 1919.

What have been the other moments of American power? Certainly the years 1945-49 when the nation possessed a

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monopoly of nuclear power. And even beyond that, maybe down to the present. For despite all the contentions of the military establishment, and the enormous recent waste of American resources in the abandonment of the draft and the over-payment of the all-volunteer force of officers and men (with their absurdly generous retirement benefits), American military power has stayed well ahead of Russian. The reason for the lead has been the almost diabolic inventiveness of American science, and the willingness of American taxpayers to go the Russians one better with the new hardware on the basis, as Herbert York put it some years ago (*Race to Oblivion* [1970]), of two to one.

America's more recent moment thus has probably lasted for the past 32 years. It has been a time akin to those weeks after the armistice of 1918. But we are really, truly, sincerely (if anyone can use that word after the Nixon presidency) a peaceful people. Despite Vietnam. If we had wanted, either at the end of the year 1918, or since 1945, we could have rearranged the world according to our desires. That is not, however, thank God, one of America's desires. □

BOOK REVIEW

Benjamin Franklin: The Shaping of Genius
Arthur B. Tourtellot / Doubleday / $10.95

William Bentinck-Smith

One of the most famous American literary works, Benjamin Franklin's autobiography is a relatively brief account of the author's life down to his fifty-first year, when he commenced service in England as the agent for Pennsylvania. The work was composed in several installments with many years intervening, and even though it does not treat his whole career, particularly his public life, it has great charm and value and a well-deserved place in American literature. Carl Van Doren called it "the first masterpiece of biography by a self-made man."

Franklin intended his autobiography only as a partial account; he wrote it, he said, for the instruction of youth and left out "all facts and transactions that may not have a tendency to benefit the young reader." Now comes Arthur Bernon Tourtellot (an eighteenth-century buff and president of the CBS Foundation) with the happy idea of using Franklin's memoir of his first seventeen years—before he fled his Boston apprenticeship and went to Philadelphia—as the core of a larger work, which would sketch the background of Franklin's family and the contemporary life of his native city so as to suggest the forces and events which helped make him the extraordinary world figure who puzzled and attracted so many of his countrymen. From first to last the result is an eye-opening, fascinating volume, original in concept, briskly and brightly written, rich in detail, and founded on historical fact.

Born in Boston in January 1706, Franklin was very much a transitional figure. Almost a son of the seventeenth century, he was deeply influenced by the living presence of Increase and Cotton Mather, though he was never their undeviating admirer. The benevolent Samuel Sewall, too, was still flourishing in Franklin's boyhood as a pillar of the same South Church, presided over by Ephraim Pemberton, which the Franklins attended. Franklin's durability, vitality, and contemporaneity so constantly mislead us that we need to be reminded that by the time of the American Revolution, he was the Colonies' senior statesman. He was five years older than Governor Thomas Hutchinson (whom he helped to bring down), and thirty years the senior of John Adams. By the time George Washington was born, Franklin had long since fled Boston for Philadelphia, been to London, and founded the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

Benjamin's father Josiah (1657-1745), originally a silk dyer from Northamptonshire, moved to Boston in 1683 and became a successful tallow-chandler and soap-maker. Ben was the child of Josiah's second wife Abiah Folger (1667-1752), a member of the noted Nantucket family. As the youngest son and fifteenth child of Josiah's numerous progeny, Ben was far at the end of the list, but Tourtellot says that in him "the Folger line united spirit, zest, rebellion, and thoroughgoing independence" with the "sturdiness, sense of responsibility, self-reliance and incorruptible integrity of the Franklins."

Tourtellot primarily emphasizes the environmental and intellectual influences that contributed to "the shaping of genius" in the many-sided Franklin of later life—his forebears, religious heritage, family circle, schooling, early reading, and particularly his experience as apprentice to his brother James, the printer, who established the weekly *New England Courant* in 1721. More than half of Tourtellot's volume concerns the apprenticeship period, and he gives a detailed reconstruction of the *Courant*'s part in Boston's 1721 smallpox epidemic, and the inoculation controversy, of Benjamin's role as Mistress Silence Dogood, and of the famous conflict over editorial freedom that James fought with the Massachusetts government.

Throughout Tourtellot's narrative runs the theme of the changing colony at the dawn of its mercantile era. The little Puritan town of less than 6,000 inhabitants that Franklin's father found when he arrived was still only slightly larger in Benjamin's boyhood. With its face turned to the sea, the port boasted more than a thousand ships of Boston registry, which were (Tourtellot tells us), "five times in number and almost three times in tonnage than registered in all the ports of the British Isles combined." The waterfront with its towering masts and rows of bowsprits, its bustling shipyards (Boston launched an average of 33 ships a year), its ropewalks and sail lofts, ship chandlers' shops, and busy docks, provided constant fascination. Indeed, one of Franklin's fondest boyhood ambitions was to go to sea, an aspiration defeated by his father's wish to see him become, if not a candidate for the ministry, at least an artisan or tradesman. Josiah Franklin finally decided to apprentice the boy in 1718 at age twelve to his brother James who had recently returned from England to set up a printing shop in Boston.

Although he left Boston in 1723, in part because of the *Courant*'s quarrel with the authorities and in part because of the friction between himself and his brother, Benjamin returned in later life "with almost decennial regularity" to "that beloved place," his native city. He accepted an honorary degree from Harvard, assisted the college library, and when he died left money to Boston for prize medals and loan funds to aid young artificers. "The Boston manner," he once wrote, "the turn of phrase, and even tone of voice and accent in pronounciation all please, and seem to revive and refresh me."

Arthur Tourtellot has splendidly brought to life this Bostonian Franklin and the Boston of his time. □

William Bentinck-Smith is a writer and editor associated with Harvard University.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Shadow of the Winter Palace: Russia's Drift Toward Revolution, 1825-1917
Edward Crankshaw / Viking / $12.95

Stephen J. Chapman

The Russian Revolution began with the Decembrist uprising of 1825, a mutiny of some three thousand soldiers and a few civilians organized by a group of Imperial Army officers intent on ending autocracy in Russia. The rebellion took place on the day of Nicholas I's ascension to the throne of his dead father, and was fired mostly by the fiction that Nicholas was a usurper. Gathering on the Senate Square in St. Petersburg, the rebels rebuffed the pleas of the Tsar's messengers to disperse, even going so far as to shoot two of the defenseless envoys. As evening drew near, a reluctant Nicholas finally ordered the crowd fired on with artillery. "This is a fine way to begin my reign!" said the distraught new Tsar.

The rebellion failed, but the scene set a pattern for the next century—a diverse crowd of citizens on one side, demanding an end to absolutism but uncertain what to replace it with; the Tsar and his soldiers on the other side, answering the demand with reluctant but uncomprehending violence; all to culminate in revolution. Crankshaw declines to place the greater blame on either the Tsars, who had the power to alter the existing order and failed to do so, or the opponents of the autocracy, whose obsessive refusals to accept anything less than the whole of what they wanted cost them every chance for progress. He notes the observation of one foreign observer in 1549: "It is a matter of doubt whether the brutality of the people has made the prince a tyrant, or whether the people themselves have become thus brutal and cruel through the tyranny of their prince."

The Russian monarchy was strikingly different from its Western counterparts in both its premises and its role in society. Unlike Western kings, the Tsar ruled unhindered by the nuisances of a constitution or a constricting system of law, a representative assembly, powerful interest groups, or in fact legal opposition of any kind. He ruled, in theory at least, as a supreme autocrat and was accepted as such by his subjects. Russia never had an independent nobility, a politically conscious clergy, or a strong and self-interested bourgeoisie; the peasants, who made up four-fifths of the population, had no political impulses beyond a fervent allegiance to the Tsar. Society literally had no place in politics, which is best illustrated by the legal prohibition not only of criticism of the state, but of praise as well.

The country was run for the most part by the bureaucracy, which had hardly anything in common with the people it ruled. In Crankshaw's words, "The central government with its tightly organized provincial apparatus extending over unimaginable distances was, in so far as it affected the governed, less the administrative nexus of a unified nation than the colonial service of an occupying power, having no organic connection with the subject people." Whatever the Tsar's formal authority, most power was exercised by provincial officials, often with callous and brutal force, and with a peculiarly Russian result that foreshadowed the "revolutionary" creations of Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin:

> When these [provincial officials] are neither vested with a defined measure of responsible autonomy nor bound by any precise code covering all contingencies, the opportunities both for passing awkward decisions back to the centre and for arbitrary action must between them create that ambience of uncertainty which is far more favourable to the development of tyranny than the harshest code of laws: for with a precise code of laws, no matter how repressive, the subject knows where he is and can take evasive action. Under the Russian system nobody knew at all where he was: nobody therefore moved. Absolute repression was thus imposed with a minimum of statutory prohibition.

Crankshaw's superb portraits of the four Tsars during this period combine sophisticated, often critical judgments with a genuine sympathy for their common determination to preserve what they sincerely saw as a divine inheritance. He paints each in rich colors: Nicholas I, inflexibly committed to the principle of autocracy, but personally insecure and erratic in judgment; Alexander II, the "Great Emancipator" of the serfs, sensitive and humane, torn between his conflicting beliefs in reform and absolutism; Alexander III, dull-witted but cynical and pragmatic, ruthless in responding to his father's assassination by establishing a thoroughgoing police state; Nicholas II, weak and easily dominated by his hysterical wife, ignorant of the volcanic social forces that would ultimately swallow him, who against his deepest instincts allowed the country to move far toward Western-style liberalism.

Crankshaw's attention to the Tsars tends to magnify their many errors, but he accords plenty of criticism to their enemies. The liberals—mainly the Kadet deputies in the first and second Dumas—too often fell into irresponsible demagoguery and refused to compromise when they should have—in 1906, for instance, when they flatly refused to have anything to do with Count Witte's government or to accept anything less than a formal constitution. The Mensheviks, who shared the Social Democratic Party with the Bolsheviks for a decade and a half, were not the humanitarian reformers of popular myth: Their differences with Lenin's followers grew not out of fundamental philosophical or even tactical disagreements, but out of their distaste for Lenin. And Crankshaw leaves no doubt of his own contempt for Lenin, a political genius with the "killer instincts of the power-seeker." Comparing the beliefs of Nicholas and Lenin in their own infallibility, Crankshaw writes:

> ...at least Nicholas inherited a long-established and widely shared delusion: he believed he was the obedient instrument and regent of God on earth. How to compare this millenial and in some sense humble fantasy with the raw lunacy of a man who, denying God, inheriting no burden of responsibility, singles himself out and unforgivably proclaims that he and he alone can succeed where all other men in the history of the world have failed?

The scope of this book exceeds its length; as a result, the author skims over the last decade of the imperial system, neglecting such matters as the devastating effects of World War I on the Russian people and their confidence in the government. Similarly, he largely ignores the long-term problems that underlay the 1917 Revolution, principally the agrarian crisis. The valiant efforts of most liberals to effect change through the *zemstva* and the wartime committees receive too little attention, as do Stolypin's reforms.

But Crankshaw has his own version of this somber story, and he tells it with a novelist's narrative ability, sense of drama, and eye for the significant detail. *The Shadow of the Winter Palace* is a lucid, intelligent piece of work, beautifully written and impressively literate. It is also a saddening testament to the failures, shortcomings, and sins of those on both sides of the struggle who helped to deliver Russia into Bolshevism. One remembers the words of the essayist Chaadyev, who in 1830 wrote: "[Providence] seems not to take the slightest interest in our destiny... we have given nothing to the world, we have learned nothing from the world. We have contributed nothing to the progress of the human mind, we have only disfigured it. It would seem that we have lived, still live, only to serve as a great lesson of some kind for a remote posterity which will know how to profit by it." That has been the fate of modern Russia even more than it was of Chaadyev's Russia. The generation that will know how to profit from Russia's history is still to be born. □

Stephen J. Chapman is a free-lance writer living in Washington.

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CORRESPONDENCE

British Bitterness

In defending Charles Lindbergh against attacks that were never made on him, John Chamberlain (May 1977) misunderstands the bitterness so many British feel. At the crisis of our existence, the big gun of the America First movement threw all his weight against economic help (not military, of that there was no question) to the country that gave him sanctuary from publicity hunters in the hour of his distress.

I accept that Lindbergh was not anti-Semitic (who says he was?) though it is rather hard to believe this about Hermann Goering, who confiscated the insurance payments of Jews whose property was wrecked in the Crystal Nacht of 1938 in Berlin. But what Lindbergh said and did was calculated not only to warn Britain of her military inferiority to Germany but also to weaken the British will to fight Hitler (and, incidentally, Stalin; Mr. Chamberlain conveniently forgets that in 1939 the two were allies). Lindbergh brought the full weight of his great reputation to bear on such leading figures as Lloyd George and to scare them into the very attitude of appeasement that Americans so heartily condemned in Neville Chamberlain the year before.

It may be that Charles Lindbergh did no more than warn us of our failure to rearm before the war. The impression he gave over here, however, was that he warned America against trying to help plug the gap at the moment when the war was obviously going to begin. Of his endeavor to help the Jews I am ready to be convinced (though one certainly saw no fruits of it). But in view of what happened at Pearl Harbor and in the Philipines, I always thought it odd that Charles Lindbergh should have railed at Britain's unpreparedness. He could have looked more profitably somewhere else.

George Edinger
London, England

Mr. Chamberlain replies:

Believe it or not, I can see the English point of view about Lindbergh. As events proved, he underestimated the Churchillian breed. By a combination of tenacity, help from the American military-industrial complex, and the plain luck of getting hold of a duplicate of the Nazi encoding machine (which gave them perfect foresight), the British came through. So it is understandable that they should view Lindbergh's 1939-40 prophecy of doom as defeatist nonsense.

But didn't Churchill say, "In victory, magnanimity"? What I would like to see, as a matter of promoting Anglo-American comity, is some attempt by British writers on Lindbergh to realize there was an honorable isolationist point of view in America in the thirties. (The new Ambassador to the Court of St. James, Kingman Brewster, was right there with Lindbergh in the America First days, and surely the British will want to understand him.) We had gone into World War I—in reality, a European civil war—and gotten little enough for it. The Europeans, at Versailles, simply didn't know how to make a lasting peace. (Lloyd George said "squeeze 'em till the pips squeak," if I remember.) Lindbergh's father, one of the "little band of willful men" excoriated by Woodrow Wilson for opposing the war, could have said, "I told you so." So why is it so incomprehensible that Charles Lindbergh, who had had a close-up view of German strength, should have tried to bring about a compromise peace in Europe in 1940-41? If the West should eventually succumb to the Soviets, Lindbergh's attempt to stop the second European civil war in the late thirties will seem to those in Communist Gulags, to have been an honorable miss.

Hayek's Relevance

Professor O'Lessker, in his review (May 1977) of F.A. Hayek's *The Mirage of Social Justice*, argues that Hayek's analysis in terms of abstract principles results in a work irrelevant to real world events. One could wonder, instead, whether the review merely reveals O'Lessker's inability to apply abstractions for an understanding of concrete occurrences.

O'Lessker states that "one of the central propositions in the book" is the view that the free market process is similar to a game, "a game partly of skill and partly of chance." But anyone who has actually read *The Mirage of Social Justice*, and the preceding volume, *Rules and Order*, would realize that *the* central theme of Hayek's trilogy is the important difference between a planned order and a spontaneous or self-

(*continued on page 43*)

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CURRENT WISDOM

Newsweek

An amusing interlude with the paraverbal Mr. Andrew Young, American Ambassador to the United Nations:

Q. Are we morally superior to the Communists?

A. I would define morality as enlightened self-interest. I think that I reject nineteenth-century morality totally...That old Platonic ideal that there are certain pure moral forms just isn't where we are...I'm a preacher and I'd rather not talk about morality because when I talk about it everybody thinks of an old-fashioned Biblical morality. Political morality is a long ways from church morality. That was the hard thing for people to understand about Jimmy Carter. He was a churchman, a member of a conservative church, so they wanted to make his concept of human rights something out of a Sunday-school class. Actually, it's a very sophisticated political tactic that's producing significant change.

Q. Is the Administration saying it is in Russia's interests not to suppress people?

A. Yeah, in a real sense we are...Repression causes more dissent rather than quells it, and if you keep on applying pressure, you're creating conditions for the overthrow of governments.

Q. What is it about the UN that makes you think you can do something useful there?

A. Well, if you're going to talk about America living as a part of a world situation, then what better arena to demonstrate that it can be done than a world arena? At the same time, you have a tremendous opportunity of also being an ambassador *to* the U.S. from the UN, in that people are constantly asking about your beliefs. My problem now is that I can't get out of the newspapers. I really don't ask for this [publicity]...The exposure is very dangerous in this job, but it's also a tremendous asset and opportunity for communicating with the American people.

Q. What can any one individual do in this job? You're the servant of policy.

A. But you're not...When you make up your mind to do something, by the sheer power of the human spirit you can do it. If you believe and nobody else believes and you're willing to work your behind off to make it happen, it *will* happen.

Q. What is it that you want to happen?

A. I just want folks to be peaceful with each other and understand each other and solve their problems without killing each other. It's very simple.

[*March 28, 1977*]

Ms.

Report of a sad burden bravely borne by an *apparatchik* of ideological pilosity:

I need some support. It seems that every woman in my hometown shaves her legs and armpits and wears makeup. I have a morbid habit of looking through photo albums and comparing myself to relatives and family friends. I start feeling ugly. Then I look through the fashion magazines and my feelings grow more intense. I would love to see some fashion photography of healthy, natural women wearing beautiful, comfortable clothing. Even after six years, I'm *still* not comfortable with the sight of body hair, though the feel of it makes it too good a thing to give up. Dana Elken
St. Paul, Minn.

[*February 1977*]

All Things Considered

A shocking revelation divulged on National Public Radio's celebrated broadcast news magazine "All Things Considered," a mandatory daily tryst for the constituency of conscience:

Dogs make a lot of concessions to live with human beings, and we make very few concessions to them. I estimate that ninety percent of America's dog owners are not qualified to own dogs.

[*May 26, 1977*]

Burlington [Vermont] Free Press

A high point in the moral recrudescence now taking place in historic West Palm Beach, Florida:

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—The local Parent-Teacher Association has told fathers not to accompany their children to a summer movie program because "we want to avoid child molesting," says a PTA official.

[*June 11, 1977*]

Time

An enlightened reader of *Time* delivers up his estimate of Field Marshal Idi Amin the Wise:

There are many black people in this country and throughout the developing world who see this man as a great leader. He refuses to submit to Western economic and political dominance.

[*March 28, 1977*]

The Greensboro Record

The esteemed *Greensboro Record* reports the buoyant vision of Mr. Craig Schoonmaker, homosexual activist and accomplished sociologist:

The opposite sex is at best irrelevant and at worst a grievous annoyance to homosexuals.... In a homosexual world there is absolutely no reason why women *have* to be a part of a man's life. One need not have friends of the opposite sex.

[*June 6, 1977*]

The New Republic

Etiology and sophistry as practiced by TRB, ageless moral ham, of *The New Republic*:

...take foreign affairs. Could the U.S. have dropped 500,000 tons of bombs on Cambodia which didn't even have an anti-aircraft gun, if it had been white? There's a kind of implicit racism in our international dealing. There aren't many blacks in the State Department.

[*February 12, 1977*]

Rolling Stone

A learned commentary on the American Century, from the *Rolling Stone*, a magazine for modern aesthetes:

History will remember this century as the times of Charlie Chaplin and Lily Tomlin. Had they been of the same generation and collaborated, the outcome would be staggering. She is phenomenal. Bill Revill
Middletown, Connecticut

[*May 5, 1977*]

The Washington Post

From our nation's capital the redoubtable *Post* exposes another example of the benign services provided by those judicial pests now dedicated to improving the Land of the Free:

MIAMI (AP)—Mercedes Brenner has tried for years to tell Rolando Duvallon she loves him. He isn't interested and has had her arrested 58 times. Now, a judge has ordered Duvallon to submit to a psychiatrist's examination.

"There's something wrong when a man complains time and time again that a woman is molesting him," assistant public defender Mike Tarkoff told a court Thursday.

Circuit Court Judge Wilkie Ferguson Jr. agreed.

[*June 4, 1977*]

New Statesman

Oracular salvo from the left-wing *New Statesman*, the conscience of England's dynamic Labour government:

To the young codgers, in particular, the notion that the richer countries have some responsibility to the poorer ones, that something should be done about the vast inequalities in the world, is mere gibberish. Inequality is precisely what they are interested in. They measure their success by the amount they outstrip their neighbours, and they believe that the best occupation for the poor is to admire the rich—from a distance. The infantile Right, whose views on world economy have a positively 18th-century optimism, seem to think it logical that the poor will get richer merely by inhabiting the same globe as the rich. We wish we could share their optimism.

[*June 17, 1977*]

Ms.

The life of the mind as lived in the classified section of *Ms.*, the forward-looking journal of American termagancy:

Z. Budapest, High-Priestess-Witch, is leading a woman's pilgrimage to Anatolia and Lesbos in September. Focus: Goddess Worship. Write: WOMANTOURS, 5314 North Figueroa St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90047. Limited reservations.

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[*May 1977*]

Mother Jones

Tommyrot done to perfection:

Within the minute it takes you to read this ad, 100 U.S. animals will be slaughtered and one Third World person will die from starvation.

The correlation? Meat-eating is a contributing factor in world hunger. An acre of soybeans has eight times the protein yield of livestock production. The vegetarian diet is more agriculturally efficient, healthier and good for your soul.

[*January 1977*]

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generating order. The former social arrangement limits social growth to the knowledge and preferences of those who design and guide the society. The latter social system is led by no single scale of preferences, but instead is one in which each individual is left to pursue his own ends within general rules of conduct that do not explicitly exist to serve any particular individual, but rather operate as "rules of the game" within which all are free to use their individual knowledge as they see fit.

To argue that these are "abstract principles" not directly relevant to the real world can only leave the reader wondering whether the reviewer is capable of distinguishing the difference between a free society and that of a slave.

Richard M. Ebeling
Sunnyside, New York

Mr. O'Lessker replies:

Mr. Ebeling is clearly very angry at me, but his reasons are rather less clear than his anger. The only substantive objection to my review that he is willing to reveal is that I talked about *a* central proposition, while he is able to identify *the* central theme, of Professor Hayek's new book. The reader, if he wishes, can study chapters nine and ten to decide whether I exaggerated the importance which Hayek himself attaches to the notion of market procedures as being "in all important respects...wholly analogous to a game." But instead of disputing the reasons I explained for my objections to that analogy, Mr. Ebeling enunciates a different Hayekian principle—one with which I am entirely in agreement.

He accuses me of being incapable of making the connection between Hayek's principles and real-world phenomena. Had he read my review with anything like the care with which I read the book, he would have understood that my objections had little to do with Hayek's preoccupation with principles. Instead, as I clearly stated, the principles expounded in the new book add nothing whatever to the great exposition of the very same principles in *The Constitution of Liberty*; nor are they expounded with the meticulous logical care of the earlier work.

A book reviewer's job, it seems to me, includes letting the reader know whether a book is worth buying and reading. Throughout the review in question I repeatedly paid homage to Hayek as one of the great men of the twentieth century, but I felt constrained to report my judgment that the present book is an unworthy addition to the corpus of his work. And I gave quite a number of reasons for that judgment—none of which Mr. Ebeling has taken the trouble to confute. As to whether that proves me incapable of distinguishing free state from slave, here again the reader can decide for himself.

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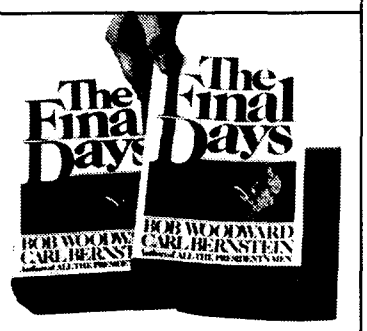

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